CHARLES · DARWIN & OTHER ENGLISH THINKERS

S · PARKES · CADMAN

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CHARLES DARWIN AND OTHER ENGLISH THINKERS

CHARLES DARWIN
AND
OTHER ENGLISH THINKERS

WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL VALUE

BY

S. PARKES CADMAN

A SERIES OF LECTURES DELIVERED BEFORE THE BROOKLYN INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES DURING THE AUTUMN OF 1910

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TO

MR. FRANK S. JONES

OF BROOKLYN

THIS BOOK, WHICH OWES MUCH TO HIS
FRIENDSHIP AND INSPIRATION
IS RESPECTFULLY
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PREFACE

THESE lectures were delivered under the auspices of The Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences during the months of November and December, 1910. At the kindly suggestion of Professor Franklin W. Hooper, the Secretary of the Institute, they have been prepared for the press. While they remain substantially as they were given, they have been revised with the view of rendering them more serviceable to ministers and laymen alike. I shall feel abundantly rewarded if the volume stimulates the reader to further research concerning the men and the subjects with which it deals.

It has not been an easy task faithfully to convey the exact meanings and points of difference in the close reasoning of these scientific and philosophical writers; hence I have thought it wise to allow them to speak for themselves whenever possible. It will probably be said that many facts of prime importance have been omitted, and some others misinterpreted. This is more than likely; and if so, I must be held wholly responsible for it. But I sincerely hope that I have been able to give a little direction in that path which leads to a more complete apprehension of the Truth.

I am profoundly convinced that science and philosophy and ethics, however they may appear on the surface, are the friends and not the foes of religion. And I believe that a new day has dawned for the Christian Church, in which she can fearlessly and yet reverently utilize their newer conceptions for the enrichment of her message to the generation she seeks to serve. It has not been my aim to write a constructive work along these lines, but simply to place in the most favorable light consistent with accuracy a group of thinkers whose teachings have been sometimes supposed to stand in irreconcilable contradiction to the essential truths of Christianity.

I take this opportunity to record my sincere thanks to my colleague in the pastorate of the Central Congregational Church, the Rev. William Muir Auld, whose wide knowledge of these subjects has been of great assistance to me. He has also favored me by reading the proofs and preparing the Index and Bibliography.

S. Parkes Cadman.

Brooklyn, New York City.

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FIRST LECTURE

CHARLES DARWIN

"Let him, therefore, who would arrive at a knowledge of nature, train his moral sense; let him act and conceive in accordance with the noble essence of his soul; and, as if of herself, nature will become open to him. Moral action is the great and only experiment in which all riddles of the most manifold appearance explain themselves."

NOVALIS.

DARWIN AND OTHER ENGLISH THINKERS

I

CHARLES DARWIN

THE year 1809 was the *annus mirabilis* of the nineteenth century for both Europe and America. It witnessed the advent of Lincoln, Wendell Holmes, and Poe on this continent; on the other, of Gladstone, Tennyson, FitzGerald, Chopin, and Mendelssohn. Last, but not least, Charles Darwin was born in the ancient and historic town of Shrewsbury, England, on February the 12th of that remarkable year. The visitor to his birthplace cannot fail to be struck by the configuration of the town, standing as it does on the crest of a bold eminence encircled by the River Severn, and commanding a wide and varied view of the surrounding country. It is a quaint and beautiful borough, with winding lanes and narrow streets, cloistered retreats, half-timbered and Jacobean houses, and stately churches which cherish with a proud regret the days that are no more. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries "to go to town" meant for the gentry of the Midland shires to go to Shrewsbury. Its civic importance is still considerable, and the remains of the Castle with the venerable

and flourishing Grammar School are links between the past and the present.

Dr. Robert Waring Darwin, the father of Charles, was the leading physician of the community; a man of stalwart physique, noted for his professional skill and practical sagacity, and esteemed by rich and poor alike for the wisdom of his counsel and the helpfulness of his disposition. His father, Erasmus Darwin, grandfather to Charles, was also a physician, well known as the author of *Zoönomia, or The Laws of Organic Life* (1794), a minor attempt to follow the lead of Lucretius in his *De Natura Rerum*. The production was marked by excessive generalization and a tendency to indulge too freely in theoretical speculation. These features found a robust but more restrained expression in the works of his grandson. Darwin's mother was a daughter of Josiah Wedgwood, whose artistic achievements in pottery rank with those of Palissy. His maternal grandmother was one of a remarkable bevy of sisters — the Allens of Cresselly — of whom two married Wedgwoods; one, Sir James Mackintosh the philosopher; and another, Sismondi the historian. Darwin's aptitude for reflection, his patient fidelity, his absence of self-assertion, his magnanimity and sweetness of disposition, were in large measure inherited from his mother.

The Darwin home, known as "The Mount," was built by his father in 1800, and stands on

the high ground overlooking the town. It is a plain substantial mansion with terraced walks on the western front descending to the river. From its elevated position there is an unequaled prospect of the scene of the Battle of Shrewsbury, fought in 1403, and the dim blue hills of Wales beyond. In the distance are the gray, crumbling walls of Haughmond Abbey; and behind them the woods of Attingham, skirting the landscape with stretches of somber green. The Severn turns abruptly toward the south, and flows through one of the loveliest valleys of England, past the castellated rocks of Bridgnorth and the cathedral cities of Worcester and Gloucester, until it meets the tidal waters of the Bristol Channel. From below the house ascend the hoarse murmurs of the traffic of the town, the hum of busy marketers, and the chiming of bells from many steeples.

When a child, Darwin was taken by his mother to the Unitarian chapel where Samuel Taylor Coleridge once held forth with Hazlitt as one of his hearers. From 1818 to 1825 he was a scholar of the Grammar School, a royal foundation of King Edward VI. He would frequently run the mile or more between his home and the school, praying Heaven's aid that he might arrive punctually. Possibly he stayed too long in the amateur laboratory he and his brother had fitted up in the garden tool-house, or tarried over his growing col-

lections, which at first included seals and foreign coins, stones and minerals, and later beetles and other insects. When he was ten, he studied the pebbles in front of the hall door, and wondered how a glacial boulder of local fame had been deposited in a place near at hand. It is easy to understand how the narrow and pedantic system of education which then prevailed in English secondary schools repelled this shy and retiring lad of opposite tastes and predilections. The severely classical atmosphere was so uncongenial to his desire for natural pursuits that he was provoked into rebellion. Dr. Butler, then head master, and later bishop of Lichfield, referred to young Darwin in the most unappreciative terms, because he preferred to dabble in chemical experiments rather than conjugate Latin verbs and memorize Greek paradigms. One picture of his schooldays shows him curled up in an embrasured window of the Elizabethan building, reading Shakespeare by the hour. "Nothing," he confessed in later years, "could have been worse for the development of my mind than Dr. Butler's school, as it was strictly classical, nothing else being taught except a little ancient geography and history. The school as a means of education to me was simply a blank." [1]

As he approached his majority he evinced a liking for field sports which unnecessarily dis-

[1] Darwin's *Life and Letters* (N. Y., 1893), Vol. I, p. 28.

turbed his father; for after all it was at bottom a nature interest, just as were his long walks in the rural lanes of the vicinity. These were intercepted by his enrolment at Edinburgh University to prepare himself for the family vocation of physician and surgeon. Here he remained two years. Among his fellow students were his elder brother, Erasmus, and his friend Robert Grant, afterward professor of zoology in University College, London. He again followed his own course. Most of the lectures were to him "intolerably dull," — even geology, the science to which in after life he was deeply attached, was viewed with violent aversion. Indeed, he vowed that never again would he read a book on the subject. Biological research chiefly occupied his attention, and it became increasingly evident that he had no liking for his father's intentions. Realizing this, the good Doctor made the ill-starred suggestion that he should enter Cambridge and qualify for Holy Orders. The project was entered upon; but as theology was more repugnant to him than medicine or the classics, it speedily came to grief. Nevertheless his residence at Cambridge, though brief, secured for him the friendship of men of mark whose recognition encouraged him to have confidence in himself, and whose kindly sympathies stimulated his enthusiasm for the study of the general order of nature. Among these

were Professor Henslow (the first man to take the measure of Darwin's great possibilities), Dr. William Whewell, Professor Ramsay, and his uncle Sir James Mackintosh. Darwin was known among the undergraduates as "the man who walks with Henslow."[1] From this unusual circle of social and learned intercourse accrued the main benefits of his Cambridge period. Not that he shirked other work; he was tenth in the list of candidates of 1831 for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, he studied and enjoyed the arguments of Paley, and was fairly proficient in mathematics, while even in the despised classics he obtained tolerably good results. If Darwin's education did not give him a full mind, it certainly gave him an eagerness for unraveling complex subjects and the power of reasoning out his own conclusions. His scientific proclivities were accentuated by reading Baron Humboldt's *Personal Narrative* and Herschel's *Introduction to the Study of Philosophy.* These volumes stirred in him the ambition to add "even the most humble contribution to the noble structure of natural science."[2] He was introduced to the eloquent and influential Sedgwick, who persuaded him to revoke his hasty decision respecting the study of geology. Ultimately it became apparent that he was not entirely satisfied with the orthodox view of the earth's formation, and he did not

[1] Darwin's *Life and Letters*, p. 44. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 47.

hesitate to oppose some conclusions Sedgwick entertained. Their tour in North Wales for the purpose of examining certain strata led to an amiable but decided difference of opinion as to the validity of the current method of geological interpretation. At the conclusion of their investigation he found awaiting him an offer to join the *Beagle*, due to the friendly interest of Henslow, and which combined recreation with suitable work. From the moment he accepted it, his personal achievements became a necessary and important part of the history of mankind.

II

The voyage of the *Beagle*, now a familiar story, was by far the most important event in Darwin's career. It set the seal upon the nature of his life-work, and molded his mental gifts for the onerous tasks that awaited them. The first genuine discipline of his mind was due to his enforced solitude and detachment on board ship, necessitating steady industry and concentrated attention — habits which, though tardily acquired, served him well and made possible the marvelous results he afterward obtained. On his return home his father viewed with astonishment the changes wrought in him, and excitedly exclaimed, "Even the shape of his head has altered!"

The official record of the cruise, entitled *The Journal of a Naturalist's Voyage Round*

the World, appeared in 1839, and was respectfully dedicated to Sir Charles Lyell. Darwin was always conscious of his indebtedness to this distinguished thinker, and throughout their long and intimate intercourse he subscribed himself as Lyell's "affectionate pupil." "I always feel as if my books came half out of Lyell's brain," he says, "and that I never acknowledge this sufficiently."[1] Henslow had placed a copy of the first volume of Lyell's *Principles of Geology* in Darwin's hands when he embarked on the *Beagle*, with the warning that, while he should by all means read it, he should pay no attention to its wild theories and conclusions. The young naturalist, however, was rapidly becoming a self-reliant student, and now and afterward Lyell's works and their far-reaching implications altered the whole tone of his thinking. They so strongly influenced his own conclusions that but for their inspiration the *Origin of Species* might never have been written. In 1845 he again addressed himself in a letter to his master, "I have long wished, not so much for your sake as for my own feelings of honesty, to acknowledge more plainly than by mere reference how much, geologically, I owe you. Those authors, however, who, like you, educate people's minds as well as teach them special facts, can never, I should think, have full justice done them except by

[1] *More Letters of Darwin*, p. 117.

posterity; for the mind thus insensibly improved hardly perceives its own upward ascent." The *Journal* met with high consideration from the first; men of learning, in both Europe and America, accorded it their hearty praise as a unique record of travel and research. The *Quarterly Review*,[1] the magazine of scientific progress, dealt at length with its observations and declared they contained valuable material for constructive thought. The style was simple, yet vivid; the descriptions were those of a devotee who scrutinized every curious phenomenon; the facts, many being entirely new, were all carefully detailed. While possessing the romantic interest attached to an excursion in hitherto unknown fields, the volume has been conspicuous for its impressiveness and intellectual integrity.

Darwin did not, as many have supposed, discover the doctrine of evolution. Nor was he by any means the first exponent of the origin of species, or of the notion that species became changed in the course of time. The conception of biological development prevailed long before his day. It was known to the classical writers, and persisted more or less throughout the periods following on the progress of Humanism and the Revival of Learning. Among moderns, Goethe, De Candolle the Elder, Lamarck, Buffon, and Chambers had foreshadowed some of the conceptions that Darwin's discoveries

[1] Vol. LXV, p. 224.

afterward placed on a sound basis. An eminent authority, Professor Judd, relates an amusing conversation he had with Matthew Arnold in 1871. "I cannot understand," said Arnold, "why you scientific people make such a fuss about Darwin. It's all in Lucretius." To which Judd replied, "Yes, Lucretius guessed what Darwin proved." Whereupon Arnold rejoined, "Ah! that only shows how much greater Lucretius really was, for he divined a truth which Darwin spent a life of labor in groping for."[1] The author of *Culture and Anarchy* underestimated the real worth of Darwin, not only in placing a poet's intuition over against a scientist's discovery, but in failing to appreciate the herculean toil of more than thirty years devoted to the application and illustration of a thesis which many had surmised yet could not demonstrate.

Previous to his time there had been constant discussions among men of science as to the possibility of substantiating the prevailing views regarding the immutability of species. Students were tempted to exclaim concerning Mosaists and evolutionists, "A plague on both your houses!" Debates were endless and fruitless; the theological thought of the day, which was also the thought of many scientists, stood directly in the path of investigation. Geological formations were attributed

[1] *Coming of Evolution*, pp. 3–4.

to a series of cataclysms of which the Deluge was the last and most important. With each of these catastrophes all living creation was completely destroyed and the planet retenanted by an act of special and direct creation. This position was meant to conform with the biblical narratives, and seemed to clinch the claim for their divine inspiration. The fatal objection, however, was the lack of uniformity and continuity, which unprejudiced men felt were essential to any true interpretation of the natural order. Violent interferences and new creative acts were, in their opinion, poor substitutes for the reign of law, and there was a growing tendency among the "Uniformitarians," as they were called, to seek the method of divine operation in something more stable and capable of rational explanation. But the absence of a determinative principle dealing with the evidence on the crucial point bewildered these advocates. They were silenced in the presence of a mystery which both attracted and repelled them.

Darwin's attempt at solution was not a conscious effort. When he excavated the fossil remains of animals from the South American pampas, he saw how closely they resembled their living progenies around him, and grave doubts touching the accuracy of the catastrophic theory flitted through his mind. The same striking correspondences existed else-

where, and he began to grope for an adequate explanation of these strange analogies. While on the *Beagle* the task of collecting and describing specimens consumed his time and prevented his theorizings from reaching maturity. After his return home he spent some years in arranging these facts according to the best known systems of classification. Even when this was done he hesitated long before arriving at the most tentative conclusions. Yet the saliency of his ordered materials was such that he began to drift from the moorings of traditional opinion. In this dissatisfied state of mind he chanced to read for relaxation Malthus's *Essay on the Principle of Population*. The immense struggle for existence with which it deals had already painfully impressed Darwin. Malthus's main argument was that nature has self-restraint, and when life increases beyond the proper means of subsistence competition ensues, the weak go to the wall, and the strong are established. It instantly occurred to Darwin that a similar principle operated in the organic world, resulting in the formation of new species, and these preventive checks would also account for the destruction of unfavorable variations. In this association between the struggle waged by individual types and the succession and disappearance of species, we have the key to Darwin's interpretation of evolution. The germinal idea of his theory flashed upon him

with the suddenness of intuition. Plato's plea that such intuition is the highest form of reasoning — and such it is since it depends on previous and thorough preparation — has seldom received better support.

Always cautious and critical, Darwin was still anxious to avoid precipitate action. He did not commit his theory to writing until 1842, when he prepared a brief abstract of thirty-five pages, which he expanded during the summer of 1844 to two hundred and thirty pages, and finally published in 1859, after an interval of seventeen years. He was repeatedly admonished by his brother Erasmus, Sir Charles Lyell, and others, that some one would forestall him; but he persevered in his reticence, until their fears were realized. Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, a young traveler and naturalist, sent him an essay on *The Tendency of Varieties to Depart Indefinitely from the Original Type*, which Darwin saw at a glance contained the gist of his own theory. In the spring of 1858 Wallace lay sick with fever at Ternate in the island of Celebes. In lucid intervals his thoughts recurred to the ever-present problem of species; and the writings of Malthus, which he had read twelve years before, suggested to him, as they had to Darwin, the theory of natural selection. As soon as he was able, he sketched an outline and forwarded it to Darwin by the next mail. It was a singularly clear and comprehensive

presentment of the hypothesis now known to both, and he accompanied it with the unwittingly naive suggestion that he believed it to be entirely original. Darwin was struck as with "a bolt from the blue." Distracted by domestic affliction, and himself a sufferer from precarious health, he wrote at once to his confidant, Sir Charles Lyell, enclosing Wallace's document with the comment, "I never saw a more striking coincidence; if Wallace had had my manuscript written out in 1842 he could not have made a better short abstract. . . . So all my originality, whatever it may amount to, will be smashed, though my book, if it ever have any value, will not be deteriorated, as all the labor consists in the application of the theory."[1]

Grave issues were at stake. The merit of enunciating an illuminating principle was about to be assigned. Any personal bickerings regarding priority might have engendered animosity such as that which, in 1846, threatened to arise between Adams and Leverrier with reference to the discovery of Neptune. Wallace had anticipated Darwin in writing, as Darwin had anticipated Wallace in conceiving and amplifying the main features of the principle. This was an unfortunate complication which had in it the seeds of acrimony. But it was handled with mutual forbearance and consummate justice. There has never been a more chivalrous rivalry

[1] Darwin's *Life and Letters* (N. Y., 1893), Vol. I, p. 473.

than this which arose so inadvertently for Wallace, so unexpectedly for Darwin. The conduct of the interested parties was unimpeachable, and reflected credit on them and their supporters. Their papers were read together at a special meeting of the Linnæan Society on July 1, 1858. The absent Wallace entirely acquiesced in the decision of the council, which awarded the precedence to Darwin. As proof of this, his letter to Mr. George Silk may be quoted: "I have read the *Origin of Species* through five or six times, each time with increasing admiration. It will live as long as the *Principia* of Newton. Mr. Darwin has given the world a new science, and his name should in my opinion stand above that of every philosopher of ancient or modern times." [1] Fifty years later he reiterated his earlier praise in a memorial address he delivered on July 1, 1908, and protested against the honor which he believed had been too freely accorded to him. "*I* was then (as often since) 'the young man in a hurry'; *he*, the painstaking and patient student, seeking ever the full demonstration of the truth he had discovered, rather than to achieve immediate personal fame. . . . It was really a singular piece of good luck that gave me any share whatever . . . [or] allowed me to come in, as a very bad second, in the truly Olympian race in which all philosophical biol-

[1] Wallace's *My Life*, Vol. I, p. 372.

ogists were more or less actively engaged." [1] The force of admiration cannot go farther. Whatever doubts may exist as to the justice of the estimate — and Wallace would appear to depreciate unduly his own share in the achievement — there can be none as to its generosity. No nobler example of self-abnegation adorns the history of science or philosophy.

III

While it is impossible within the limits of a single lecture to give an extended exposition of the Darwinian theory, its main outline, and the revolution it wrought in the scientific world, can be briefly stated. Huxley's incisive putting of the evolutionary thesis has no superior for completeness and lucidity. "All species have been produced by the development of varieties from common stocks; by the conversion of these, first into permanent races and then into new species, by the process of *natural selection*, which process is essentially identical with that artificial selection by which man has originated the races of domestic animals — the *struggle for existence* taking the place of man, and exerting, in the case of natural selection, that selective action which he performs in artificial selection." [2]

This theory involved an amazing transition,

[1] *Fifty Years of Darwinism*, pp. 19–20.
[2] Huxley's *Collected Essays: Darwiniana*, p. 71.

which was indicated both by Darwin's solemn declaration concerning it and the controversies it aroused. He had been at infinite pains, by repeated tests and experiments, to verify every conclusion he advanced. He admitted that much was obscure and would long remain obscure, but his statement on the issue was couched in terms that preclude any misgiving as to the depth and sincerity of his conviction. "I can entertain no doubt, after the most deliberate and dispassionate judgment of which I am capable, that the view which most naturalists until recently entertained, and which I formerly entertained — namely, that each species has been independently created — is erroneous. I am fully convinced that species are not immutable; but that those belonging to what are called the same genera are lineal descendants of some other and generally extinct species, in the same manner as the acknowledged varieties of any one species are the descendants of that species. Furthermore, I am convinced that natural selection has been the most important, but not the exclusive, means of modification." [1]

Darwin held that in nature there was an inherent and self-acting power which produced the absence of trees in Southern Continental America, the adaptation of animals to their environment, and also that of the smaller species

[1] Introduction to *Origin of Species* (London, 1902), p. 6.

abounding in the regions formerly occupied by their huge and extinct ancestors. Thus he accounted for differences in breed, and the coming in of the new and the going out of the old types, which had hitherto been the insoluble problems of animate creation. The central idea of the *Origin of Species* is that every form of organic life, high and low, is derived from a very small number of original forms. Every variety of vegetable and animal organism, now extant, or having formerly existed, owes its origin to the slow and gradual operation of the modifying influences of local and special causes transmitted by heredity. Whatever forms were best suited to any particular time and locality were selected and adapted by the working of natural laws. Many illustrations of the working of these laws are to be found in Darwin's pages. His patience and care in arranging and explaining with exactitude a multitude of facts, his candor in modifying and retracting hasty or incorrect inferences, his unfailing intellectual poise when surrounded by difficulties, were marks in him of the true scientific spirit, "the spirit in which to acquire lessons from nature, whether in the world of mind or in the world of matter." [1]

The reception which Darwin's first volume received from the scientific community has been mentioned. It is now in place to speak

[1] Cf. John Fiske's *Darwinism and Other Essays, p. 35.*

in some detail of the hostility it excited, how this arose, and what it contained. The prevalent views of creation were based either on Moses or on Milton. If an orthodox naturalist of the pre-Darwinian epoch had been required to give a satisfactory account of the immense number of varieties of organic life, probably he would have taken refuge in the doctrine of immediate creation as authorized by the common interpretation of the Book of Genesis. Even those who admitted evolution as a possible alternative, as did the Huttonian School, were completely in the dark concerning the *modus operandi*. The intelligent people who were not scientists had no concern with these difficulties. They did not even know of their existence. For them the conceptions of the past ages as embodied in Milton's poetry were all-sufficient, and the adaptation of the creation epic in *Paradise Lost* gave permanence and dignity to the "revealed" truth of Hebrew tradition. Curiously enough this was the only poetry Darwin read while on the *Beagle*. At the moment when he first questioned the doctrine of direct creation, the familiar lines in which it is so tersely described were before his eye:

> "The earth obey'd, and straight
> Op'ning her fertile womb teem'd at a birth
> Innumerous living creatures, perfect forms,
> Limb'd and full grown. Out of the ground up rose
> As from his lair the wild beast, where he wonns

In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den;
Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walk'd;
The cattle in the fields and meadows green:
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.
The grassy clods now calved; now half appear'd
The tawny lion, pawing to get free
His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,
And rampant shakes his brinded mane." [1]

An indication of the hold this glowing imagery had on the imagination of all classes is found in the preference of Professor Agassiz, the foremost American scientist of his day, for Milton's presentation over Darwin's theory, and his assertion that not only was each species specially created, but created in the proportions and the locality in which it was found to exist. Old controversies were renewed and new ones generated around these opposing theories. The significance of Darwin's contribution aroused a regrettable acerbity. The insularity of English life had conserved its prejudices, and these in turn gave birth to some pronounced tendencies in radical directions. The reactionaries practically controlled science and theology; anything that savored of liberalism was strongly denounced, and its manifestoes were either repudiated or treated with ridicule and misrepresentation. The Universities were under the sway of the Anglican Church, which was then well on into the first phase of the

[1] Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book VII, lines 453–466.

Oxford Movement; scientific professorships were held by clergymen, and Cuvier's theories of "world catastrophes" and the immutability of species were cordially received because they afforded a supposedly scientific basis for the Mosaic account of the Flood. Dr. Buckland, a prominent and energetic scientist of the clerical order, uncompromisingly asserted that all scientific teaching must be forever subordinated to the cosmogony of Genesis.

In the heat of fervid disputation men forgot that Darwin was a specialist in his own department of science; they ignored the expert skill and tempered judgment of his discussion; and they did not allow for his own admission that many things would long remain obscure. His assumptions were as well known to him as they were to his critics. He was fully aware that he began with them and depended on them. If he were allowed to premise a world and in it a first or a few created forms, in a suitable environment, and with certain capacities, he would show how that world was tenanted with living beings. These were tremendous assumptions, and his deductions from them aroused a storm which at one time rose so high that it seemed as though his voice would be lost in the clamor and he would not obtain a hearing. The opposition was purer in motive than in practise. Many scientists and theologians were chiefly anxious to conserve

the spiritual principles which for them were inextricably woven into the dogma of direct creation. Natural Selection appalled them as a dangerous novelty which threatened to substitute mere physical force for the operative and beneficent wisdom of God. Sentiment lent its powerful aid to their forebodings. It was exceedingly hard for them to throw away the old wine-skins, and the strength of their religious convictions was against such a stroke of temerity.

Nor can it be said that their protestations were groundless. Questions that demanded the most careful handling suffered from the recklessness of those materialistic evolutionists who entered into the new teaching with such ardor that they overran all boundaries. Haeckel, Büchner, and Clodd were the prominent representatives of this school. They were unwilling to admit that evolution could be thwarted by ultimate origins; it was so absolute that if it did not account for everything it accounted for nothing. Granted "a fortuitous concourse of atoms" as a beginning, the theory needed no assistance and left no gaps between those atoms and man himself. The idea of a directing Creator was a figment of the brain, and matter in motion the all in all. This unwarranted extension of Darwinism was really a decaying philosophy which used the evolution theory as a mold in which to recast its worn-out

conceptions. Darwin lent no direct encouragement to such spurious notions, and it would be unjust to charge their raw rationalizing and philosophical improprieties against him. Every notable man has to run the risk incurred by the vagaries of his disciples, and to them must be assigned much of the persistency of the later opposition to Darwin's theory. Materialistic evolutionists felt confident that by reducing everything to their mechanical system they could eventually conduct the Deity to the verge, and, in the language of Comte, "bow Him out with thanks for His provisional services."

Another source of confusion was that which arose out of the use of terms, a confusion frequently more mischievous than actual error. The controversialists failed to remember that terms like "force" and "cause" were employed metaphorically and not metaphysically — that is to say, with no direct reference to ultimate origins. All truth is relative, and so vital a theory as evolution was found to have many far-reaching consequences; but specifically considered, it is no more than a description of the Creator's methods of creation. "Material phenomena, so called, are not material at all; they are the expressions for complicated psychical states." Extremists on both sides neglected these important qualifications, while some were malicious and kindled their fires not so much for the radiance as for the smoke they would diffuse.

It is unnecessary to dwell at length upon Nietzsche's doctrine of the Superman — a wild and atrocious alienation of the Darwinian hypothesis which subverts the moral order — for we do not achieve true moral progress by surrendering to a struggle for existence, but by combating and finally abolishing it. Nietzsche was a severe critic of Darwin, and he argued against him on behalf of "an inner creative will in living organisms which ultimately makes environment and natural conditions subservient and subject." [1] In this sense the German philosopher is on "the side of the angels"; but his bitter attack on Christian morality, and his anxiety to produce a society by means of an unregulated struggle for power in which might is the only right, constituted him a prophet who was born thousands of years behind his time. His favorite conception of life, in *Beyond Good and Evil* (p. 226), is really a plea for rampant cruelty, and his favorite moral conception is that of a filibuster.

In the theological realm writers emphasized the miraculous interferences manifested in direct creation, and clung tenaciously to the doctrine of the immutability of species. A universe produced and maintained by natural laws was for them hard of belief. Guidance and purpose seemed to have disappeared from the creative scheme. The Hebrew Scriptures

[1] A. M. Ludovici's, *Nietzsche, His Life and Works*, pp. 69–70.

fostered credence in a special creative providence, and Christian people generally were wont to regard unusual expressions of divine power as alone worthy of God. If no such interruptions occurred, they hastily assumed that the scheme must be self-originating, self-sustained, and moving blindly to no end. But to presume that whatever happens in natural order is to no purpose is not reasonable. It has been pertinently observed that "if an event represents a divine purpose, it is as truly purposeful when realized through natural means as it would be if produced by fiat."[1] To say God created everything, and to leave the matter there, counts for nothing, save as evidence of a desire to deprecate inquiry and fortify tradition in a monastic seclusion of the mind. Intellectual peace purchased at the price of strangled thought is a delusion and a snare. No one can for long escape the vibrant movements of the times by refusing to deal with the inevitable results of advancing knowledge. If he can, and if he does, it is only the postponement of a battle which becomes the more disastrous for him the longer it is delayed. The sole function of science is to address itself to the questions springing out of the manifold activities of the visible universe; and if, in its attempts to answer these, there is a breach of intellectual harmony, it can be healed only

[1] B. P. Bowne's *Immanence of God*, Chap. I, p. 13.

by a steady conformity to the authority of truth, and an unwavering faith in its ultimate right to prevail. Nor should it be forgotten that evolution, natural selection, and kindred terms describe a process for which they do not and cannot account. As a mode of operation that process is the best yet disclosed; but as a doctrine of mechanical causality it is altogether impossible.

The late Professor Borden P. Bowne confronted the issue in a manner at once courageous and scholarly. From the first, he took the position that evolution as a theory of causes is worthless, as a theory of the order of progress it is harmless. He had profound respect for Darwin as a scientist, but he carefully distinguished between the description and formulation which science gives and the causal and purposive interpretation which philosophy and theology seek. When this distinction is observed — and it is the distinction between a process on the one hand and its origin and aim on the other — confusion ceases to exist. Darwin had no marked gifts for metaphysics. His mind was essentially analytical, and tended toward the minute observation of separate organisms. Beyond framing hypotheses for facts he did not care to go, considering it outside his province to speculate on the origin of life or matter. He refused to venture into regions requiring methods of investigation with which he was

not familiar. Fully aware of the splendor of this theory of life which he advocated, a splendor that came into mental view during moments of calm contemplation, he expatiated on the several powers of sentient existence, and how these had been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms, or even only one. While the planet had pursued its ageless cycles, according to the fixed law of gravity, endless species of beauty and wonder were continually being evolved from so simple a beginning. Lyell, so far back as 1836, writing to his friend, Sir John Herschel, who shared his belief in the derivation of new species from preëxisting ones by the action of secondary causes, asserted that the conception appealed to him as "the grandest he had ever known so far as regards the attributes of the Presiding Mind."[1]

There is nothing in evolution derogatory to the Eternal Being or His designs when thus considered. On the contrary, there is much to be gained by a frank admission of the majesty and lawfulness contained in this exposition of the Creator's handiwork. And when it is clearly understood, and the fatal obstacles of ignorance and misapprehension have been removed, it will contribute increasingly to the honor and glory of God. Modern science has carried the idea of uniformity into

[1] Lyell's *Life and Letters*, Vol. I, p. 468.

every realm of the universe. In this sense it is the special illumination of our age, and after fifty years the mists of misunderstanding are being scattered, while the proportion and value of conflicting claims are more quickly discerned. When Weismann said that the wonderful results of evolution were brought about as though they were guided by a supreme intelligence, he spoke better than he knew. Theologians and men of faith need no longer be afraid of science. They can accept the reign of law, and they can rejoice in it. It is confirmatory in many ways of the greatest and most distinctively Christian ideas they can entertain concerning the workmanship of the All-wise God.

IV

When Darwin published the *Origin*, he had already accomplished enough original research to place him in the front rank of scientific investigators. The equally well-known volume on *The Descent of Man* was not issued until 1871, though the interval between the two treatises was filled with prodigious labor. He had purposely refrained from discussing the place man held in his system, because he was anxious to avoid needless friction, and felt that nothing was to be gained from an unsympathetic disregard for the religious susceptibilities involved in the theme. He was the most courteous of men, and he showed it by

his efforts to avoid any outrage of these devout feelings. At the same time he was equally honest, and in the *Origin* he had hinted that light would be thrown on the beginnings and history of man. But he believed that it was useless and injurious to parade his convictions prematurely or without offering convincing evidence for their support. *The Descent of Man* excited more interest and less opposition than the *Origin of Species*, thereby justifying the wisdom of the delay. His general position may be stated as follows: he could not admit of any break between man and the rest of animal creation, for the physical affinities of the human race with lower forms of like structure were so marked that they compelled him to push his evolutionary theory to its logical conclusion.

It is interesting to note, however, that Wallace, in his explanation of the origin of man, introduces other important factors into the process. He does not deny the development of man's moral and intellectual faculties from animals, yet he affirms that they have not been evolved by natural selection. Their operating cause cannot be discovered in the realm of natural law, but are to be found in the unseen kingdom of spirit. Three stages, containing much besides the human, exist in the unfolding of organic life. At each of these stages some superior power must necessarily have entered into action. The first marks

the change from the inorganic to the organic, when the earliest vegetable cell was a new thing in the world. The second is still more marvelous, for it heralds the dawn of consciousness — the fundamental distinction between the animal and vegetable kingdoms. The third is the appearance in man of those noble faculties and primary moral characteristics which raise him forever above the brute and open up possibilities of almost infinite advancement. These higher powers could not have been developed by the same laws which ruled the organic world. They are so distinctively different in quality from purely biological results that they suggest a world of spirit to which the world of matter is altogether subordinate. Conscious life is a progressive manifestation dependent upon different forms of spirit influx. If this ascensive scale of reasoning is valid, evolution is homocentric, and not only does it not degrade man, but man confers purpose and honor on evolution. He is the crown of its ageless and infinite processes, and he is equipped with spiritual powers that make him the one supernormal fact before which ordinary explanations are inadequate. He reflects the moral nature of the Deity and discloses the moral meaning of the universe, while his destiny gives worth to the drama of existence as enacted on this planet.

The only way of escape from these conclu-

sions is by disregarding the evidence adduced, and defining the whole creation as an aimless process, which has no conscious reason for its existence, indicates no aim, and simply moves in blind obedience to inexorable and soulless law. This way is barred by the truth, now widely recognized, that mechanism cannot produce mind, nor can matter be ultimately permuted into thought. Lord Kelvin, the greatest philosophical scientist of the closing days of the last century, wrote to the London *Times:* "Scientific thought is compelled to accept the idea of Creative Power. Forty years ago I asked Liebig, walking somewhere in the country, if he believed that the grass and the flowers which he saw around us grew by mere chemical forces. He answered, 'No, no more than I could believe that the books of botany describing them could grow by mere chemical forces.' Every action of human free will is a miracle to physical and chemical and mathematical science." [1]

The theistic conception of the universe has been held by many scientists, some of whom deemed it not only morally desirable but philosophically and scientifically necessary. Their change of attitude is indicated by the statement of Lord Kelvin that behind all phenomena there is the power of a Supreme Intelligence. The knowledge of God can be

[1] Cf. Bowne's *Immanence of God*, Chap. I, p. 21.

obtained by an inductive process of reasoning from known data, and the revelation of His character must then be discerned in the person and teaching of Jesus Christ. Such is the general course indicated by theological thinkers like Martineau, Fairbairn, Walker, and Gwatkin. According to them we can proceed from philosophy through metaphysics to a broad and sufficient theological basis. The natural phenomena science discerns, philosophy unifies under the governance of certain principles; metaphysics weaves those principles into a higher unity, and Christian theology concentrates and clothes them in the doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood. Professor Henry Jones of the University of Glasgow has appositely said that "the scientific investigator who, like Mr. Tyndall, so far forgets the limitations of his province as to use his natural data as premises for religious or irreligious conclusions, is as illogical as the popular preacher, who attacks scientific conclusions because they are not consistent with his theological presuppositions. Looking only at their primary aspect, we cannot say that religious presuppositions and the scientific interpretation of facts are either consistent or inconsistent; they are simply different. Their harmony or discord can come only when the higher principles of philosophy have been fully developed, and when the departmental ideas of the various

sciences are organized into a view of the world as a whole."[1] This task has still to be accomplished; the forces from below and above have yet to meet; and when they do, it will be as friends and not as foes. Moralists and scientists will not always treat each other with scorn and misunderstanding. A more comprehensive view of the movements of human knowledge will show that not one of these has labored in vain. The growth of that knowledge is toward unity by the perception of differences, differences which, duly considered, constitute a final harmony. The poets have seen this. Their prescience rebukes the disputes which have hindered its coming; and though their dreams may not be admitted by hard-and-fast rationalists, they are a prophecy and an inspiration. Those who would purify themselves by observing and thinking upon the ways of Deity must accept the lessons science has to teach, remembering that its ultimate movement is up and not down, forward toward idealism, and not backward to mere beginnings. The theistic view can have no quarrel with the proven results of scientific research; it can have no alliance with the reactionary obscurantism which opposes such results without reason or proof to the contrary.

Speculative reflections on the course of nature have shaken the convictions of many

[1] *Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher*, p. 36.

in regard to the benevolence therein displayed. The cosmic process is so unlimited, the organic world so mysterious and replete with pain and death, that the older theistic arguments have failed to deal with the situation. They cannot cope with the groaning and travailing of creation. In this intellectual chaos man finds himself endowed with certain capacities which can eventually win the mastery over death, and he sees in Christ one who actually was its Master, whose very being was the incarnation of truth, whose claims have been supported by His achievements. He stands forth in time, a solitary figure, the conscious regenerator and representative of a new humanity, the redeemer, whose person was the source of immortality, whose teaching transfigured the life that now is and revealed that which is to come. He bade all who yearn for these consummations to come unto Him. He expressed the character of the otherwise unknown Deity and the potentialities of His offspring. This gospel of God as the universal Parent, who made heaven and earth, who, while immanent in all that is, is yet transcendent, who is soul and circumference of the whole, has changed the visible world into a pellucid garment behind which throbs the life and love divine. In Him the creation is spirit-woven; thought and sense, spirit and matter, are reconciled. Thus believing, as Christ has taught us, God is no longer a

hidden God, nor yet a vague and shadowy impersonality encompassing the infinitudes. He is seen, as Archbishop Fénelon said, "in everything, and everything in Him; all that exists, existing only by the communication of His exhaustless being; all that has intelligence having it only by derivation from His sovereign reason; all that acts, acting only from the impulse of His supreme activity."[1] In this faith we can await with confidence the time when the region of a true religion will include the interpretations of a complete science. There have been and there are periods of struggle and sacrifice; and the sufferings these involved have shaken many hearts. Without denying their reality or extent, it is possible to exaggerate them, and Wallace went so far as to argue at some length that the popular conception of pain and misery in the animal world is the reverse of the truth. The entire scheme accomplishes the maximum of life and of life's equipments with the minimum of pain and misery. Indeed, it would be difficult, according to him, to imagine a system by which a greater balance of happiness could have been secured.[2] We can leave the apportionment of pain and joy in creation to a future assignment. As for progress itself, we know it is based on the law of sacrifice; everywhere and always the

[1] Cf. Illingworth's *Divine Immanence*, p. 24.

[2] Wallace's *Darwinism*, p. 40.

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two are coëxtensive. Suffering among civilized peoples is an element which we try to banish yet we are not blind to its educative uses. Man's immortality and perfectibility beckon us forward despite the cost, because in them the spiritual secret of the entire universe is revealed. And what is true in religion is also true in ethics. Justice, mercy, and charity have been strengthened by their conflict with the evils they oppose and destroy, and the history of these virtues signifies for them a higher and more permanent rule in the future of the race.

V

Throughout life Darwin was subject to violent paroxysms of pain, which often occasioned great alarm to his friends. He was never able to work consecutively for more than twenty minutes without interruption from these infirmities. The extent of his afflictions was never known to any save his faithful and devoted wife, who gave her entire time and strength to the care of his health, and the beautiful correspondence of their domestic life was the explanation of much he was able to accomplish. He could have been the center of social life among all ranks; but he was seldom seen beyond his own home at Down, for he was never sure of freedom from one of these sudden visitations. They so enfeebled him that even a brief journey

to London was exhausting. Burdened with extraordinary difficulties, he achieved his results by the exercise of the sternest resolution. Every moment he could gain was spent in methodical and laborious studies, and the list of his various publications testifies to this unremitting energy. His modesty was almost a weakness; and when he confessed, with touching simplicity, that he believed he had acted rightly in steadily following and devoting himself to science, those who revered him knew not which to admire the more, his great gifts or his incurable humility. He was fortunate in his friendships. The names of Wallace, Hooker, Scrope, and Lyell are associated with his fame; and the really impressive worth of these men was not so much their intellectual greatness as the grandeur of character, the unexampled forbearance, and the mutual assistance which distinguished them as coadjutors in a notable cause. Some votaries of science have shown themselves disastrously prejudiced and jealous; they have been more anxious for the priority of their personal claims than for the purity of their motive or the progress of knowledge. But this band of giants dwelt in a fellowship marred by no regrettable incidents, and strove toward the attainment of a great ideal, hand in hand and conjoined in heart, in honor preferring one another.

It is interesting to note the effect of Darwin's

inquiries on his personal religious life. As a boy he was very susceptible to spiritual impressions, and after he began his scientific career he was still a Theist, though gravely perplexed by the pain incident to animal existence. When he published the *Origin* he still believed in a personal God, and considered that the grand and wondrous universe, with our conscious selves, was the chief argument for such a faith. Later in life he stated that the theory of evolution was quite compatible with belief in that God, but added that different persons have different definitions of what they mean by God. His confessions were never meant for the public eye. He felt strongly that a man's religion is a matter concerning himself alone. Yet the fluctuations of his religious moods are now public property, and they show that in the extremes of doubt he was of an agnostic tendency, but never an atheist in the sense of denying a Supreme Being. In the autobiography he wrote for his family, occurs a passage describing his solitariness in a Brazilian forest, his spirit resurgent with the higher feelings of wonder, almost worship which elevate the mind. "Now," he continues, "the grandest scenes would not cause any such convictions to arise in me. It may be truly said that I am like a man who has become color-blind, and the universal belief by men in the existence of redness makes my loss of perception of not the

least value as evidence."[1] If Schleiermacher is correct in stating that the home of religion is in the emotional nature of man, there may here be a better explanation than has been surmised for the waning of religious faith and sentiment in Darwin. His æsthetic tastes and propensities were atrophied by reason of his absorption in the study of the laws of nature. Until he was thirty years of age the poetry of Milton, Gray, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley gave him pleasure. He read the historical plays of Shakespeare with delight, and music and art were also sources of recreation. But in later life they nauseated him, and he secured a temporary respite from his toils by listening to the reading of books that did not call for the exercise of much concentration. His mind had become a machine for grinding laws out of large collections of facts, and he deplored the injury thus inflicted upon his mental and moral capacities.

A hundred years have passed away since Charles Darwin was born, the last fifty of which have been dominated by him more than by any other man of science. A great soul is the epitome of the race, and in so great a soul as his, dedicated to the search for truth, the race was born to larger opportunities. He was the first to catch and reflect a light, the conscious advent of which, without him, might have

[1] Darwin's *Autobiography and Letters* (N. Y., 1893), p. 65.

been indefinitely postponed. He created a revolution which has had no equal in the intellectual history of the modern world since the Renaissance and the Reformation. His mind, like an artesian well, was pierced deeply by his constant meditations, and a stream of clear truth sprang forth which washed away the barriers that restrained scientific and even religious thought. He gave coherence and meaning to the inchoate accumulations of natural knowledge. He stimulated research and mapped out the lines on which it could intelligently proceed to ascertainable ends. Nor is it too much to say that his work "chastened and refined"[1] not only the intellectual but "the moral aspects" of science and philosophy. The entire field of human effort has acquired new promise and dignity. For although biology was the cradle of the movement, its ramifications have spread into many other fields which have become abundantly fertile. To Darwin belongs the unspeakable merit of inoculating his own and future generations with the idea of progressive development. The statesman, the social reformer, and the theologian have been touched with a new enthusiasm born of the hope of better things. They determined to parallel the story of progress in nature by effecting a like unfolding in the realms of politics, ethics, and religion. In

[1] *Fifty Years of Darwinism*, p. 4.

directing the eyes of the world toward an ideal, all the more attractive because its outlines are lost in the bright faith of a possible perfectibility, Darwin did the greatest service man can render to his fellows.

A day dawned when controversy was hushed in the presence of death; criticism gave place to tribute; and all vied with each other in their eulogies on the departed scientist. Huxley, who knew him intimately, voiced the common sentiments when he referred to the extraordinary affection and esteem for his character as a man, and the veneration for his endowments as a scientific philosopher, which were felt throughout the world. Intellectually he had no superior, and his infinite variety and accuracy of knowledge attracted the best minds. "Acute as were his reasoning powers, vast as was his knowledge, marvelous as was his tenacious industry, brave as was the struggle he waged against ill health, these were not the qualities," continued Huxley, "which impressed those who were admitted to his friendship; but a certain and almost passionate honesty, by which all his thoughts and actions were irradiated as by a central fire, was the rarest and greatest endowment."

Darwin died suddenly on the 19th of April, 1882, and on the 24th was buried in England's great Abbey at Westminster, in accordance with

[1] Huxley's *Darwiniana*, pp. 245–246.

the general feeling that such a man should not go to the grave without the chief recognition the British nation can bestow on her elect sons. The body rests by the side of that of Sir Isaac Newton, who did for the heavens what Darwin did for the earth. "For just so surely as the discovery and demonstration of the law of gravitation established order in the place of chaos, and laid a lasting foundation for all future study of the heavens, so surely the discovery of the law of natural selection established a firm basis for all future study of nature."

SECOND LECTURE

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY

"And though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter?"

JOHN MILTON.

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY

I

IT is an appropriate transition from Darwin to the man who was his close ally and fighting general in the controversies aroused by the publication of the *Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*. Darwin could not have been more fortunate in his exponent, advocate, and defender. He seldom noticed attacks which were ill-natured and unjust, and maintained a dignified silence in the presence of a frantic and unscrupulous opposition. Some extreme participants endeavored to stifle the evolution theory at its inception. Scientists have placed the chief blame for this hasty condemnation upon theologians and ecclesiastics, ignoring the fact that not a few of their own leaders repudiated the Darwinian hypothesis as untenable and absurd. Without enlarging on the strange conduct of Sir Richard Owen, whose shufflings provoked even the gentle nature of Darwin, Sir Charles Lyell had considerable difficulty in preventing Sir William Dawson from adversely reviewing the *Origin* before he had opened the book. After naturalists had begun to feel the weight of its reasonings, they were slow to admit them. As a newly discovered principle,

natural selection was compelled to face an unprepared and prejudiced public.

At this juncture Thomas Henry Huxley stepped into the breach, threw down the gauntlet, and during the strenuous period that followed became the recognized champion of freedom for scientific thought and utterance. He was already favorably known to Darwin, who had declared that there were three men in Britain upon whose verdict he relied, Lyell, Hooker, and Huxley. If he could convince them, he could afford to wait for the rest. The last of the three, a brilliant young scientist still in his thirties, who by the extent and accuracy of his knowledge, and the soundness of his scientific judgment, had become equally formidable as an opponent or apologist. After rapidly reviewing the *Origin*, he wrote to the author: "As for your doctrine, I am prepared to go to the stake, if requisite, in support of Chapter IX and most parts of Chapters X, XI, XII. . . . I trust you will not allow yourself to be in any way disgusted or annoyed by the considerable abuse and misrepresentation which, unless I greatly mistake, is in store for you. . . . Some of your friends, at any rate, are endowed with an amount of combativeness which (though you have often and justly rebuked it) may stand you in good stead. I am sharpening up my claws and beak in readiness."[1]

[1] *Life and Letters of T. H. Huxley*, Vol. I, p. 188–189.

The writer of this militant letter was born at Ealing, a suburb of London, on May 4, 1825. He was the seventh and youngest surviving child of George Huxley, senior master in the well-known school of Dr. Nicholas. In his *Recollections* he ascribes the majority of his physical traits to his mother, whose maiden name was Rachel Withers. His faculties of intuition and criticism, his keenness of perception and flashes of sardonic humor were also a maternal inheritance. They were helpful gifts, though not without serious drawbacks. He confessed that at intervals they played him sad tricks and were in need of constant restraint. Deeply attached to that mother, young Huxley would lie awake at night possessed by the morbid fears of a sensitive and affectionate child, and wondering what would become of him in the event of her death. When at length the dreaded blow fell, it crushed him, and for a time his grief knew no bounds. He was not an easy boy to understand, and her approbation and sympathy had been his highest rewards. His eldest and always favorite sister promptly took the mother's place, and but for her encouragement at this crisis he might have lost forever the buoyancy and determination which afterward enabled him to stem the tides of a tempestuous career. To his father were due his choleric temper, tenacity of purpose, love for paintings and music, and the artistic faculty

which enabled him to make those instantaneous and vivid sketches with which he illuminated his lectures.

II

Huxley's early education was not so thorough as might have been expected; but the academic loss was compensated by his zeal for literature, his indomitable will, and the intercourse he shared with well-informed people. When he was twelve he read Hutton's *Geology*, a valuable book which preceded Lyell's *Principles*, and a little later he studied Hamilton's *Logic*. The author, however, who most profoundly influenced his formative years and inspired his high ideals of duty and passion for veracity, his abhorrence of unreality and contempt for subterfuge, was Thomas Carlyle. In 1840 he obtained a copy of *Sartor Resartus*, and from that moment he was made aware of the purpose and discipline of life. An incidental result of his contact with the Sage of Chelsea was his esteem for Continental languages. He at once commenced the study of German, and also obtained a thorough knowledge of French and Italian. These acquirements later enabled him to tabulate international scientific authorities, and by their means he systematized the results of foreign research and compared them with his own. For a youth of fifteen to gain unaided a knowledge of foreign tongues was almost un-

known in England at that time. Huxley's insight was always remarkably acute. He saw how Teutonic thought had fed the flame of Carlyle's genius, and he determined to make himself familiar with the masters of philosophy, history, and science in their own speech.

As he approached his majority, interesting glimpses concerning his impressions and observations can be gathered from his reminiscences. Speculations on the why and wherefore of things in general, discussions on the rights and wrongs of existing institutions, a chronic impulse to penetrate to the bed-rock of facts, are frequently found; while prevading all else there is a contemptuous indignation toward anything that savors of injustice and oppression. This resentment was painfully accentuated during his residence in Rotherhithe, where he commenced his medical studies with a certain Dr. Chandler. Here, in the black heart of one of London's centers of destitution and ignorance, unmitigated vice and misery abounded. Squalid surroundings, with their resultant waste of humanity, drew from Huxley the bitter comment that the place was "a vast Serbonian bog, which swallowed up hope and being." Contact with these sickening scenes of woeful social disorder left an indelible impression on him; they cut him to the quick, and many years afterward he said, "I have had the opportunity of seeing for myself something of the

way in which the poor of London live; not much, indeed, but still enough to give a terrible foundation of real knowledge to my speculations." [1]

He escaped to a less poverty-stricken section of the city, and joined his brother-in-law, Dr. John Godwin Scott, as a preliminary to obtaining his medical degree at London University. The conditions for the entrance examinations required testimonials of character, and among those solicited was John Henry Newman, then an Anglican vicar, who had once been a pupil in the school of Dr. Nicholas. In 1842 he was admitted to Charing Cross Hospital, and finally, in 1845, graduated with marked success in chemistry, anatomy, and philosophy. The professor in the last-named subject, Wharton Jones, impressed Huxley as much by his personality as by his teaching. His fellow students recalled in after days the tall, cadaverous youth, whose extraordinary energy resulted in his first contribution to science — a hitherto undiscovered structure in the human hair sheath. This discovery is still known as "Huxley's layer."

III

His application, on leaving college, for a position as surgeon in the Royal Navy secured him an appointment to the frigate *Rattlesnake* as assistant to Dr. Thompson. In one respect

[1] *Life and Letters of T. H. Huxley*, Vol. I, p. 16.

there is a similarity between his beginnings as a scientist and those of his intimate friends Darwin and Hooker. Darwin made his famous voyage in the *Beagle*, Hooker accompanied Sir James Ross to the Antarctic regions, and Huxley spent four years in the Australian waters.

After vexatious delays, against which Huxley chafed, the cruise of the *Rattlesnake* began on December 3, 1846, under the command of Captain Stanley, the brother of the well-known Dean of Westminster. Sydney was reached on July 16, 1847. The Admiralty offered meager provision for the researches Huxley was expected to make; but the lack of a suitable equipment only spurred him to additional efforts, and added merit to his achievements. His published results dealt with the lower organisms known before as *Zoophytes* and now as *Cœlenterata*. He carefully arranged the series, and demonstrated that a common plan of structure obtained among them. His generalizations upon these, together with other kindred matters, were in themselves sufficient to give him commendable rank in any philosophical history of zoology. The results were forwarded to the Linnæan Society, London, "with much the same outcome as that gained by Noah when he sent forth the raven from the ark." Exasperated by this neglect, he turned to the Royal Society and placed before

it an elaborate account of the anatomy and affinity of the Medusæ. "This venture proved to be his dove, although he was not aware of it until his return home." On June 5, 1851, Huxley was elected a fellow of the Society, being one of fifteen selected from a list of thirty-eight candidates — an honor indeed, the reward of sheer hard work, and, needless to say, unstained by the slightest intrigue. The unknown student who left Charing Cross Hospital in 1846, too young as yet to qualify for entrance at the College of Surgeons, was now at twenty-six a member of the world's premier organization for the advancement of scientific learning. Nothing could have been more conducive to this propitious end than his solitary life at sea. He had set out with a satisfactory groundwork in anatomy and physiology; he returned an expert in these departments of knowledge and a learned ethnologist. A layman in science can scarcely appreciate the value of personal observation and experiment if untrammeled thought is to be developed. The discoverer of such results as Huxley obtained must be detached, independent, free from the dictation of conventional schools, and thrown upon his own intellectual resources. He is then compelled to test each simple object as regards its properties and history. There is risk in this, because it is the business of the pioneer; but Huxley, escaping the dogmas of

scientific sects, challenged the risk and won the prize. Virchow's observation that this is not an unknown occurrence to one who is acquainted with the progress of knowledge can be extended to all who, like the youthful surgeon of the *Rattlesnake*, have dared, after making every possible reckoning, to steer their own course. The spirit of his enterprise is vigorously portrayed in a letter which deals with his aims and prospects. "There are," he says, "many nice people in this world, for whose praise or blame I care not a whistle. I don't know, and I don't care, whether I shall ever be what is called a great man. I will leave my mark somewhere, and it shall be clear and distinct [T. H. H., his mark], and free from the abominable blur of cant, humbug, and self-seeking which surrounds everything in this present world — that is to say, supposing that I am not already unconsciously tainted myself, a result of which I have a morbid dread." [1]

Though highly controversial, Huxley had a warm and sensitive nature, which found its climax in the perfect sympathy and charming intercourse of his domestic life. He met his future wife, Miss Henrietta Anna Heathorn, while he was attached to the Australian Expedition, and after a long and protracted courtship they were married. When she arrived in

[2] *Life and Letters of T. H. Huxley*, p. 69.

England, she was seriously impaired in health, and he was a poor and struggling professional man; but he tenderly nursed her back to strength, and she entered into his life with a fulness of reciprocal affection which aroused to activity the nobler elements of his character. Their son Leonard eulogizes the wife and mother who was to be his father's stay for forty years: "in his struggles ready to counsel, in adversity to comfort; the critic whose verdict he valued above almost any, and whose praise he cared most to win."[1] She was his first care and last thought, and their entire married life was a notable example of mutual helpfulnes and service.

IV

For some time after Huxley's return to England repeated repulses discouraged him; but the year 1854 brought him some of the more solid tokens of success. "I have finally decided that my vocation is science," he writes to an Australian friend; "and I have made up my mind to the comparative poverty which is its necessary adjunct, and to the no less certain seclusion from the ordinary pleasures and rewards of men."[2] In this sacrificial temper he began and ended his career. His earliest ambition was to become a mechanical engi-

[1] *Life and Letters of T. H. Huxley*, Vol. I, p. 39.
[2] *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. 101.

neer, and in a retrospective mood he is not sure that he had not been one all along, though *in partibus infidelium.* Physiology, which was his chief delight, is but the working out of the wonderful unity of plan in the thousands and thousands of diverse living constructions, showing their mechanical engineering, and the modifications of similar apparatus to serve diverse ends.

Huxley's labors in behalf of public instruction were second only to his achievements as an eminent scientist, and his definition of a liberal education has become a classic. It is found in a lecture delivered at the Working Men's College, London, in 1868:

"That man, I think, has had a liberal education who has been so trained in his youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order, ready, like a steam-engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of Nature and of the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender con-

science; who has learnt to love all beauty whether of nature or of art, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself. Such a one, and no other, I conceive, has a liberal education; for he is, as completely as a man can be, in harmony with Nature. He will make the best of her, and she of him. They will get on together rarely: she as his ever-beneficent mother; he as her mouthpiece, her conscious self, her minister and interpreter."[1]

This severe and dignified utterance is as notable for what it omits as for what it includes; yet his faith in it never wavered for an instant, and he extended its possibilities to all alike, tradesmen, artisans, and members of aristocratic circles. Huxley was not one of those superior dons who regard with aversion the multitude beyond the academy, or who deem a popular lecture unworthy of the serious efforts of a philosopher or a scholar. On the contrary, the task of putting the truths of the laboratory and the museum into language which was strictly accurate and yet intelligible taxed his scientific and literary powers to the utmost. St. George Mivart tells us that the need of clearness was often brought home to the professor when addressing promiscuous audiences. At the close of one of his efforts at the Royal Institution a lady approached him, and, after profuse thanks for the intellectual

[1] *Collected Essays: Science and Education*, p. 86.

treat he had given her, ventured to say there was one point she did not quite understand: "You referred to the cerebellum, and I did not gather whether you said this was inside the skull or outside." Experiences of this kind were more frequent than one would imagine, and they enforced upon Huxley the simplicity of exposition which gave urbanity and elasticity to his style. The first series of lectures to working men, just mentioned, was delivered in 1855. They were free from the pedantries of technical dialect, and revealed to thousands who dwelt in the common ways of men the fruits of his remote and arduous pursuits. The one on *A Piece of Chalk* is a sterling example of the perspicacity and maturity of his popular utterances. Without injuring for a moment the comprehension and fidelity, detail and description involved in the matters treated, he strove to make his meaning accessible to those who could not have had any previous knowledge of the subject. He enabled the non-scientific but shrewd workmen who crowded his lecture-halls to see the truth as he saw it, and the result was that experts themselves acknowledged these deliverances to be masterpieces of lucid reasoning and genuine eloquence. He satirically deplores the loss of that mellifluous oratory which leads, far more surely than worth, capacity, or honest work, to the highest places in Church and State, and

states that he has been obliged to content himself with saying what he meant to say in the plainest of plain language.

The inaugural address of Johns Hopkins University in the centennial year of 1876 is a complete specimen of the new combination of science with literature which his speeches had effected. The lectures on evolution were first heard in New York City. On his arrival he was introduced to Professor O. C. Marsh, who had made a careful study of fossils gathered from the strata of the Western states. Marsh presented his data to Huxley before he began his course. It was entirely new to him, and he promptly avowed his indebtedness. The facts demonstrated for the first time the direct line of descent of an existing animal. "With the generosity of true greatness," says Professor Marsh, "he gave up his own opinions in the face of truth, and took my conclusions as the basis of his famous lecture on the horse."[1]

Huxley was at home in the United States, and he everywhere received a warm welcome. His instincts were entirely democratic. His advocacy of thought and speech, as well as his standing as an authority on debated issues, commended him to a freedom-loving people. All classes of society were interested in him: the miners of California read his essays at night around their camp-fires, and the univer-

[1] *Marsh's Life*, Vol. I, p. 462, English edition.

sities and various bodies of learning united to do him honor. From the day he landed until his departure the visit was crowded with gratifying experiences. His comments on American life and scenery were characteristically pungent. "In the Old World the first things you see as you approach a great city are steeples," he said; "here you see first centers of intelligence." It was an infirmity of this gifted mind that it could not associate church spires with intelligence. He gazed intently at the tugboats which tore up and down New York Harbor, and remarked, "If I were not a man I think I should like to be a tug."[1] The fitness of his second preference will be admitted by those who have seen this particular craft, and who also understand his restless and resistless genius.

He readily perceived the vital relation between education and democracy, and he avowed his belief in science as a fountain of ideas which must sanitate the rule of the people. "Man does not live by bread alone," and the highest function of institutions for education is to seek out and cherish those leaders who will carry the interpretation of nature a step farther than their predecessors. By their agencies the moral worth and intellectual clearness of the individual citizen are secured, and the general welfare is advanced.

[1] *Life and Letters*, Vol. I, p. 494.

V

Ethics occupy almost as important a sphere in Huxley's teaching as science or education. He had a noble conception of character, and placed clever men low in the scale of his esteem. To Wilfred Ward he said, "Men of ability are common enough, but men of character and conviction are very rare." [1] In this statement there is nothing of the cynicism of Diogenes; it rather hints at the tremendous struggle involved in building up true character. He showed himself freely to kindred spirits like Charles Kingsley, and spoke feelingly of the influences which had saved him from shipwreck. His indebtedness to Carlyle, who taught him that a deep sense of religion was compatible with the entire absence of theology; his scientific research, in itself a severe lesson in morality, and the love he bore his wife and children were the grounds where he cast anchor and outrode the storms. They were also the bases of his frequent contributions to ethical discussions, which cannot be given at length, but which find their highest expression in the Romanes Lecture on *Evolution and Ethics* delivered at Oxford in 1893. It was brilliant, evincing a large grasp of the necessary facts, a true sense of historical perspective, a capacity for keen analysis, and the breezy candor which we have learned to asso-

[1] *Nineteenth Century*, Vol. XL, p. 284.

ciate with his utterances. He passes in review ethical theories of many nations and cults, Oriental and Occidental, Greek and Roman, ancient and modern. When he comes to his own, it appears to be a scientific Buddhism, with a heroism optimistic rather than pessimistic as the main feature of differentiation. Two prominent and descriptive phrases furnish the gate of entrance into the heart of the conception he wished to convey. He speaks of "the cosmic process," and "the ethical process." The first needs a word of explanation, the second is in direct opposition to the first.

For Huxley, as for Darwin, the struggle for existence in the life of the organic world was a fact involving tremendous issues, and beset by complications they could not wholly unravel. It constantly recurs in all their discussions of the problems of development. It had, as we have seen in the case of Malthus, a profound and formative influence on the theories of the methods of creation advanced by them and many other nineteenth-century scientists. Perhaps there was no more insurmountable barrier to faith than the one its difficulties furnished. Yet not all agree with Huxley concerning the extent and severity of the conflict. He speaks of a "civil war" between the realms of nature and of morals, and this war must continue, since the moral progress of society "depends, not on imitating the cosmic process, still less in

running away from it, but in combating it." Russel Wallace would not have admitted so much as this,[1] and Prince Kropotkin reads into the character of lower creation his own kindness and generosity. Indeed, he goes too far in the opposite direction from Huxley, and fails to perceive that where animals form combinations they do so for mutual defense and aggression; that where they remain solitary, as in the case of the tiger, it is because they can live [2] without coöperation. But if nature is not an incipient paradise, nor is it a continual shambles. Deeds of blood are constantly perpetrated; yet, like those of the ancient Greek tragedy, they are to a great extent carefully hidden. There would be no place for poetry and romance in the world if "nothing but slaughter 'were' going on from morn till noon, from noon till dewy eve." The "lives of the hunted" are largely interspaces of quiet contentment varied by occasional crises. The crises are due to geographical changes, inclement seasons, epidemics, the immense loss incurred in the early stages, and the intolerance of the group toward a weak member or toward other groups. Hence the law prevails that there is no species of animals or plants which does not depend on its fitness for its existence. This law prevents the rapidity of increase

[1] See lecture on Darwin, p. 37.

[2] See F. W. Headley's *Life and Evolution*, Chap. III, pp. 215 ff.

which can only be checked by such competition. For if all the potentialities of created life became actualities, it would swarm on land and sea as the frogs swarmed in Egypt, and ensure its own destruction; nor could it fail to drag man into the evils of such unrestraint. The same struggle goes on among plants, though it is less apparent. Parasites flourish in the vegetable kingdom, and one tree ousts another from the soil. But man has almost a monopoly of the misery of the world. The children of the poor are frequently so ill-bred and ill-nourished that they lack the vital exuberance which is the right of living beings. The stern discipline found in nature, and which renders the great service of arresting worthless types and blotting out hereditary diseases, cannot obtain in the ethical process. That fostering care displayed by the fierce beast of the forest toward its young is sometimes lacking in those dehumanized and degraded parents who cruelly oppress and neglect their offspring. When, in addition to these truths, we recall human sensibility to physical pain, and the penalties it inflicts upon the spiritual consciousness, the entire spectacle is a soul-moving horror which has caused every lover of his kind to mourn. Even in England forty-eight per cent of the population die before the age of twenty-five, and preventable diseases account for many of these deaths.

The survey is not a hopeful one, save from the Christian standpoint of a redemptive immortality, in which the law of compensation shall rectify the known wrongs of man's present heritage. And this should not induce us to consent to any relaxation of the merciful energies of relief, but rather inspire wise and philanthropic effort to readjust the burdens of the social state, and thus realize as speedily as possible a present deliverance from such intolerable ills. Huxley accepted the gist of the last statement as setting forth a necessary outcome of the ethical process. While in nature might is the only right, and its message is "Be strong or you die," in morals ruthless self-assertion gives place to self-restraint; weakness is not a crime punishable by death, but a fact to be dealt with by enlightened human sympathy; and instead of a policy of fighting for the survival of the fittest, society ordains a new one which ensures justice and happiness to the many. He believed that both these processes were summed up in the laws of nature, inasmuch as man, "physical, intellectual, and moral, is as much a part of nature, as purely a product of the cosmic process, as the humblest weed."

His idea of the opposition is that of a man trying to break a piece of string; the right arm is in antagonism to the left arm, yet both arms derive their energy from the same original

source. Hence the conflict between natural and moral principles is really a necessary element of the cosmic process; and if this were the sum total of the Romanes Lecture, it could not be said to have carried us very far in the search for truth. But Huxley made an admission, which in the opinion of his critics vitiates his whole theory. He confessed that "cosmic evolution may teach us how the good and the evil tendencies of man may have come about; but, in itself, it is incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good is preferable to what we call evil than we had before." [1] Science, then, is incompetent to account for the great moral phenomenon — the distinction between right and wrong. Small wonder is it that Huxley in conversation with Ward, in 1894, vigorously defended the argument for design, and added that "faulty as is the Christian definition of Theism, it is nearer the truth than the creed of some agnostics who conceive of no unifying principle in the world." His theory of life as expounded in this lecture demands some such unity of purpose, and he was not without glimmerings, as he neared the end of his days, that the only reasonable ground of the unity is God Himself.

[1] *Collected Essays: Evolution and Ethics*, p. 80.

VI

Huxley's views on the relation between science and religion were never left in obscurity. He believed the antagonism between them was factitious, fabricated on the one hand by religionists who confused theology with religion, and on the other by narrow scientists who forgot that science dealt only with matter-of-fact phenomena. The heathen survivals and the crass philosophies, under which true religion has so often been interred, aroused his ire. He rejoiced in the rupture, and hoped that the quarrel would never cease until science had discharged one of her most beneficent missions — relieving men from the burden of a false science imposed upon them in the name of religion. He held that the Holy Scriptures, if stripped of sentimental and misleading accretions, would favor this end, a view supported by the splendid tribute he paid the Bible, and by the significant fact that he yielded to his wife's influence and chose a religious education for his children. "Take the Bible as a whole, make the severest deductions which fair criticism can dictate, . . . and there still remains in this old literature a vast residuum of moral beauty and grandeur. . . . For three centuries this book has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English history. . . . By the study of what other book

could children be so much humanized and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession files, like themselves, between two eternities, and earns the blessings or the curses of all time, according to its effort to do good and hate evil, even as they also are earning their payment for their work."[1]

The goal of progress was a matter on which Huxley had thought long and profoundly. He refers to the Homeric sadness which arises out of the conscious limitations of man, out of the sense of an open secret which we cannot penetrate, wherein lie the quintessence of all religions and the source of all that is truly catholic in their theologies. He looks forward to the maturity of the race, when there will be but one kind of knowledge, and one method of its acquirements; when science will have its perfect work, and when ignorance, superstition, and their consequent evils will be finally abolished. This is the goal of progress as he conceived it, and he urges us toward it with luminous exhortations. His dread of any speculation in definite spiritual directions forbade an adequate and worthy climax for this cosmic movement. When we interrogate him in Browning's words, —

"You've seen the world,
The beauty, the wonder, and the power,

[1] Quoted from Ainsworth Davis' *T. H. Huxley* ("English Men of Science" Series), p. 103.

> The shapes of things, their colors, lights and shades,
> Changes, surprises, — and God made it all!
> — For what? . . . What's it all about?
> To be passed over, despised? or dwelt upon,
> Wondered at?"[1]

his answer is not couched in the terms of Haeckel's materialistic monism, which regards all that is peculiar to man as an insignificant by-product of the evolutionary system, with neither divine Alpha nor Omega. Nor does he find it in that sense of vastness in the modern universe which estimates this planet and its inhabitants as an atom of dust on the crest of a high mountain. Rather does he take refuge with a school of scientific prophets, who, by the aid of mathematical calculations, predict that the process of nature, continually evolving, must ultimately issue in a perfect equilibrium of forces, implying the total cessation of change and culminating in universal death.

Huxley expatiates at some length on this pessimistic destiny, and it is important that he should be represented in his own language: "The theory of evolution encourages no millennial anticipations. If, for millions of years, our globe has taken the upward road, yet, some time, the summit will be reached and the downward route will be commenced."[2] A structural deficiency is here discernible in his mental

[1] Browning's *Fra Lippo Lippi* (*Poetical Works*, Riverside edition v. 4, p. 80).

[2] *Evolution and Ethics*, p. 85.

nature. It frequently appears elsewhere, and its results run athwart much of his finest thinking. It lay in the absence of those adventurous tentacles which grope for the spiritual meanings of phenomena. He had few positive and affirmative sympathies with these hidden realities. Principal Fairbairn once described Newman as "an agnostic baptized with religious emotion." The description is just; for Newman's religion was pillared on a great doubt and a great fear, — the doubt he had of God's free action in the world apart from an appointed and necessary agency in the Church; the fear he entertained of the corrosive influence of human reason in matters of faith. Huxley's agnosticism was less orientalized and subtle, but, like Newman's, it was inherent. Bold to recklessness elsewhere, he here manifested surprising timidity. To affirm a personal Deity, especially one who controlled the destiny of the world and of man, was more than he could allow. Newman vanquished his fears by enthroning dogma; Huxley confirmed his obliquity by enthroning agnosticism.

A small book containing his favorite aphorisms and reflections has recently been issued,[1] and the impression these leave on the mind of the sympathetic reader is that he was seriously troubled by doubts of his own theory. His materialism was not without its misgivings.

[1] See *Spectator*, April 15, 1911, p. 553.

Indeed, he will not allow that he is a materialist. "The man of science who, forgetting the limits of philosophical inquiry, slides from these formulæ and symbols into what is commonly understood by materialism, seems to me to place himself upon a level with the mathematician who should mistake the *X's* and *Y's* with which he works his problems for real entities." But he never made any sacrifices to consistency; and while he puts aside materialism, he points out that there are still more terrible theories, and seems to uphold its possibility by threats. The rational grounds for belief, in his esteem, are often extremely irrational attempts to justify our instincts. We are to learn what is "true by setting aside all conclusions that can not be proved." "All truth in the long run is only common sense clarified." Then he somewhat changes his position. The one end of learning the truth is that right may be done. That is the sole object of all knowledge. And, after all, the world is absolutely governed by ideas, very often by the wildest and most hypothetical ideas. He asserts, "in whichever way we look at the matter, morality is based on 'intuition' and feeling, not on reason." If you ask why the few in whom these intuitions are strong move and control the mass in whom they are weak, he answers the question by asking another: Why do the few in whom the sense of beauty is strong — Shakespeare,

Raphael, Beethoven — carry the less-endowed multitude away? The fact is not explained, but "genius as an explosive power beats gunpowder hollow." Such princes upset all calculations, and create their own constituency. But may not intuition and feeling be worthy of the acceptance and even the allegiance of men? Our assurance of free-will, of the benevolence of Deity, and of the highest elements of religion, morality, and beauty, depends on them. The appeal of Christ to these intuitions and feelings has convinced and carried men upward to renewed existence. As the *Spectator* remarks, the doubts of his own plan of thought which Huxley suggests are sufficient to form a creed. Where he found his moral assurance we cannot be debarred from finding our spiritual interpretation. And this witness standeth sure, while "materialism fades and changes, and with its perpetual flux and welter of vibrations eludes us at every turn." Nor is the last word said by Huxley upon the unreasonableness of the skepticism opposed to these conclusions. For there is a distinction between doubt and skepticism, and Gladstone described it at some length when he said:

"For doubt I have a sincere respect, but doubt and skepticism are different things. I contend that the skeptic is of all men on earth the most inconsistent and irrational. He uses a plea against religion which he never uses

against anything he wants to do or any idea he wants to embrace, viz., the want of demonstrative evidence. Every day and all day long he eats the dish he likes without certainty that it is not poisoned; he rides the horse without certainty that the animal will not break its neck; he sends out of the house a servant he suspects without demonstration of guilt; he marries the woman he likes with no absolute knowledge that she loves him; he embraces the political opinion that he prefers, perhaps without any study at all, certainly without demonstrative evidence of its truth. But when he comes to religion he is seized with a great intellectual scrupulosity, and demands as a precondition of homage to God what everywhere else he dispenses with, and then ends with thinking himself more rational than other people."

We believe that both science and religion desire to express reality, and both have great realities to express. Religion, as well as science, has lived and will live by the certainty of its ideas, and these ideas are not "such stuff as dreams are made of," but sterling convictions which have shaped and transfigured the whole fabric of western civilization. Their embodiment in ecclesiastical and theological thought has suffered from the perils incident to human development. How could it be otherwise? Christianity during the two thousand years of

its existence has passed through many changes which appear to us to-day crude and barbaric. Yet, distorted and misapplied as it no doubt has been, it has met the varying needs of human nature, and become the companion of every human fate. It has instructed and elevated the ignorant, and at the same time proved the delight and sheet-anchor of the learned. It is a vital and timeless force, ever adaptable to the continually changing and enlarging conceptions of life, and going before the loftiest ideals it authorizes. Its enduring principle of regeneration was never understood by Huxley, although he admitted that its origin and steady persistence against all rivalries, was a profoundly interesting problem. He entertained the hope that the progress of accurate historical research would provide a solution. Such research has been made, and it has proceeded on well-defined lines; but no solution such as he expected has been found. For many of us it was a superfluous quest, since the personality of Jesus Christ, in both history and experience, is fully retained, and will always remain the sole explanation of this wonderful revelation. Of course, for the mind which can discover no place for a Creator, and can see no destiny save cold annihilation, "the problem of Christ" will be a curious speculation rather than a mystery of divine love and grace. To us, however, the chief end

of man is not speculation for its own sake, but that we may glorify God and enjoy Him forever; and in a God-created and God-controlled universe it is the only conceivable and worthy end. Its realization in Christ has been the stupendous religious fact, for which there is no rational explanation except in a frank admission of His claims. Huxley's consciousness of the difficulties involved in his views on life and destiny caused him to advocate a resolute front against the prospect of future nothingness. "We are grown men, and must play the man"—

> "Strong in will
> To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

He admits that a ray of light may perchance steal in upon the dreadful gloom:

> "It may be that the gulfs will wash us down,
> It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles." [1]

The natures that will find comfort in this scanty outlook are few indeed, and later teachers of the evolution school have revolted against its dismal predictions. Mr. Fiske says, "For my own part, I believe in the immortality of the soul, not in the sense in which I accept the demonstrable truths of science, but as a supreme act of faith in the reasonableness of God's work." [2] The spirit that breathes in

[1] *Evolution and Ethics*, p. 86.
[2] *The Destiny of Man*, p. 116.

these admirable words is truly refreshing. But Le Conte is more emphatic still. He holds that, without spirit — immortality — this increasingly beautiful cosmos, which has run its ageless course with manifest purpose and value, would be precisely as though it had never been — an idiot tale signifying and portending blank nothingness.[1]

VII

Huxley's value to his generation was large and varied. He was an admirable pleader for the atmosphere in which science must live to prosper; he knew the many ramifications of natural knowledge; and his original contributions were diversified and multitudinous. In regard to the latter, no biological investigator of his period excelled him. He practically founded modern embryology; reconstructed the classification of organisms, and gave a renewed interest to the facts of anatomy. As an ornithologist, competent authorities placed him foremost, the true position and relationships of the three groups of birds being for the first time disclosed by him. He explored every nook and corner of the animal kingdom, and returned richly laden with its treasures. Physiologists and biologists alone can estimate the results of his prodigious labors; all that can be attempted here is to note a few of the landmarks of his

[1] Cf. Le Conte's *Evolution and its Relation to Religious Thought*, p. 329.

later life. The many important appointments he held, the fullness of his literary and public labors, the honors bestowed upon him, and the respect paid to his professional opinions by European and American scientists, afford abundant evidence of the hold he had upon his generation. He was the world's premier professor in biology, President of the Royal Society, Lord Rector of Aberdeen University, a member of the first London School Board, trustee of the British Museum, corresponding member of nearly all scientific organizations, and a representative on several Government commissions. Degrees were lavished on him in later life. Edinburgh University led the way as early as 1866, when Tyndall and Carlyle also shared her appreciation of the attainments of a remarkable trinity of men. Dublin followed in 1878; Oxford and Cambridge came last, in 1885 and 1891 respectively. It is generally known that Huxley might have received a title in recognition of his eminent services, but his opposition defeated the project. The sole claim to nobility which becomes a philosopher is the place he holds in the estimation of his fellow workers, who alone are competent to judge his merits. Newton and Cuvier lowered themselves, in his opinion, by accepting such distinctions. Like Grote, Carlyle, and Gladstone, he preferred to be known by the plain and unadorned name of Thomas Huxley.

Failing health compelled his retirement from official life in 1885. No sense of personal gratification could delude him into holding any position for a moment after reason and conscience indicated any incapacity to discharge its duties. He went to Oxford to receive the Doctorate of Civil Law in a melancholy mood. It was a sort of apotheosis coincident with his official decease. But he mistook himself if he supposed that such retirement would mean cessation from strife. He always succumbed to the lure of the fray, and it may be said of him, as of the charger in Job's drama, "he smelleth the battle afar off." He had fought with the press at Edinburgh, where the *Witness* accused him of advocating a debasing theory, standing in blasphemous contradiction to the biblical narrative and doctrine, and wondered why the vile and beastly paradox he advanced should not have excited the wrath of the audience. It was an age of conflict, when men contended for their several positions with the zest of those who were sworn defenders of the citadel of Christian truth. Yet Huxley was more careful to avoid public criticism of religious opinion than some imagined; and Mivart, Roman Catholic though he was, went out of his way to send his son to Huxley's Kensington lectures.

Many of these contentions have become so barren that it is difficult for us to realize the

fear and dismay they once excited. Huxley did not escape the perils of the swordsman any more than Bishop Wilberforce, Gladstone, or the rampant editor of the *Witness*. The Oxford prelate was not always "florid, fluent, and smilingly insolent," or distinguished for emptiness and unfairness. He was a truly great man who vitalized the Episcopal office, and left a lasting impression on the Church of England. His flippancy in an unguarded moment exposed him to the thrust of Huxley's trenchant blade, and one may be sure that the opportunity was not allowed to pass. But it was Sir Richard Owen who inspired the Wilberforce attack, and the duel was between two rivals in scientific interpretation, with an unfortunate Church dignitary acting as the proxy of the elder one. "The voice was the voice of Jacob, but the hands were the hands of Esau." A more fortunate opponent than Gladstone could not have been found for Huxley's skillful strategy. The statesman used an agile and powerful intellect to defend theories which were not necessary to faith. He gave those theories such a large personal setting that the task of demolishing them was congenial to the scientist's habit of mind. In theology Gladstone had no history. What he was at thirty he remained at eighty, unchanged and unchangeable in an age of constant transition. Their passage at arms showed this, and placed the venerable Liberal

Prime Minister at a decided disadvantage. But it ended with a handsome postscript from Huxley: "My best thanks are due to Mr. Gladstone for his courteous withdrawal of one of the statements to which I have thought it needful to take exception. The familiarity with controversy . . . will have accustomed him to the misadventures which arise when . . . the buttons come off the foils. I trust that any scratch which he may have received will heal as quickly as my own flesh wounds have done."[1]

Whatever the merits or demerits of the fight waged in the last century, the chief result was the securing of that liberty for theology and natural science which is at once the cause and the consequence of intellectual progress. The policy of repression exercised by certain dominant factions began to weaken, and the unfettered state of present inquiry in all spheres of knowledge can be traced, in part at any rate, to the period in which Huxley was an intrepid figure. Intellectual and moral integrity were his outstanding virtues. His absolute loyalty to truth made any sort of mental dishonesty intolerable. He drove his rational inquiry through the heart of any prevalent conceptions if he believed them erroneous. Fear of men was unknown to him, and he came to the office of the scientist with the conviction that he must be the sworn interpreter of nature in the

[1] Huxley's *Collected Essays*, Vol. IV p. 283.

high court of reason, let the personal consequences be what they might. If the situation demanded it, he dealt with Darwin, whom he reverenced as he did few others, with unhesitating candor.

There has scarcely been a great physical truth whose universal acceptance has not been preceded by scorn and persecution. Crushed and maimed in every onset, this futile opposition was as rampant though not so barbarous in the nineteenth century as in the time of Galileo. This attitude aroused in Huxley the formidable powers of a first-class fighting man. It formulated his resistance, and it also accentuated his errors. He experienced somewhat the force of the divine axiom that "they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." But, believing as he believed with faith unfeigned that the welfare of the race in moral, economic, and industrial progress was absolutely conditioned by a thoroughly scientific education, it is not easy to perceive how he could have acted other than he did. Nevertheless, even to his compatriots he was a man to be handled gingerly. He said, playfully of course, that the Metaphysical Society, which met in Red Lion Square, Holborn, was afraid to ask him to become a member — he might have been such a firebrand! Gladstone, Martineau, the Duke of Argyll, Tennyson, Ruskin, Dr. W. G. Ward, Father Dalgairns, and Cardinal Manning were

members, and Huxley joined them later, proving by his conduct that the gladiator may still be a perfect gentleman. Even so, he could not forego a parting shot when the Society suspended its meetings. "It died of too much love," was his wicked epitaph.

VIII

This abounding sense of humor and biting sarcasm aided him when confronted with blind and foolish objections. On one occasion a rash cleric, who had only a meager acquaintance with natural history, attacked Darwinism with the enthusiasm of ignorance, and indulged in considerable merriment at Huxley's expense. Huxley made no reply whatever, whereupon the jocose author called his attention to the articles, and mockingly requested advice on the study of the questions involved. The professor's answer, probably written on a postcard, was all-sufficient: "Take a cockroach and dissect it." Yet his humor could be genial as well as satirical. At the end of one of his lectures he inquired if the students understood all he had been saying. One replied, "All, sir, save one part, during which you stood between me and the blackboard." "Ah," rejoined Huxley, "I did my best to make myself clear, but could not make myself transparent." On one occasion, after a meeting of the trustees

of the British Museum, Archbishop Benson helped Huxley on with his coat; and the Professor, in recounting the incident, said, "I felt *quite overcome* by this species of spiritual investiture." "Thank you, Archbishop," he remarked; "I feel as if I were receiving the *pallium*." [1] St. George Mivart in his *Reminiscences*[2] says that one evening after dinner, at which Huxley sat on his right hand, he turned to him for support on behalf of a plea for toleration. Huxley replied "No. I think vice and error should be extirpated by force if it could be done." Mivart was surprised, and said, "Then you rehabilitate Torquemada and others?" To which came the retort, "I think they were quite right in principle; they injured it by the way they carried it out." "But, surely," replied Mivart, "burning is a strong measure?" "Yes," said Huxley, "especially the *smell*."

On Ward's first introduction to Huxley he expected to meet an irascible individual, a pedant, and a scoffer; instead, he found a personality of singular charm. External gifts of manner and presence, and powers of general conversation which would have ensured popularity to any mere man of the world, were combined with those higher endowments, and great breadth of culture, to none but an extraordinary person

[1] *Nineteenth Century*. Vol XL, p. 281.
[2] *Ibid*, Vol. XLII, p. 995.

could lay claim.[1] According to the same writer the elements of gentleness and sympathy, which gave so much charm to his singular brilliancy, had become more noticeable in his later life. It is regrettable that Carlyle, the intellectual hero of Huxley's youth, and his friend in after years, is the only man who has the questionable distinction of having refused Huxley the offer of renewed friendship following upon a quarrel about natural selection. Quite a long time had elapsed since they met; but one day Huxley saw Carlyle crossing a London street, and at once rushed toward him for a handshake and a friendly word. The old man looked at him, and remarked, "You're Huxley, aren't you? The man that says we are all descended from monkeys," and turned and walked away.[2] Our sympathies are not with Carlyle, who failed in his attempt to raise boorishness to the rank of a virtue.

IX

Huxley is sometimes referred to as a materialist; but this, as we have seen, is incorrect, and he went to great pains explicitly to deny the charge. He says himself, in *Science and Morals*, that "physical science is as little atheistic as it is materialistic." The late Warden of Merton College affirms that, "with all his apparent leanings to materialism, and

[1] *Nineteenth Century*, Vol. XLI, pp. 274–278.
[2] *Life and Letters of Thomas H. Huxley*, Vol. I, p. 297.

vigorous avoidance of sentiment in reasoning, he inherited and cultivated the gift of philosophical imagination." He chose and pursued that perilous path which leads upward from ascertained facts into the sublimer regions of speculation. Here he remained enveloped in the mists of agnosticism, because he held that, for the improver of natural knowledge, skepticism is a duty and blind faith an unpardonable sin. For him doubt was better than credulity so long as he was pushing on to truth. The Cartesian philosophy helped to bring about this conservation of uncertainty. "Give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted." [1] This for Huxley was the first great commandment of science. But he adds that it was that sort of doubt which Goethe called "the active skepticism," whose sole aim is to conquer itself, and not that other sort the object of which is only to perpetuate itself as an excuse for idleness and indifference. Unfortunately Huxley never conquered his doubt. No shining sun arose on his agnostic horizon; but there were ever and anon adumbrations and a mellowing twilight, a twilight not without hints of coming morn.

After forty years of indefatigable toil, Huxley retired to his home at Eastbourne on the cliffs of England's southern coasts, still to breast the

[1] Huxley's *Collected Essays*. Vol. I, p. 169.

storms and enjoy the love and confidence of friends and foes, who, however much they agreed with or differed from him, gave him their united and hearty esteem. He died on June 29, 1895. His gravestone bears three significant and touching lines written by his wife:

> "Be not afraid, ye waiting hearts that weep;
> For still He giveth His belovèd sleep:
> And if an endless sleep He wills, so best."

This is beautiful resignation; but we believe that "He who giveth His belovèd sleep" will assign to him eternal rest from earthly misgiving and fear, and also an appropriate sphere of future activity. Surely an existence so nobly filled with higher forms of human effort cannot be doomed to the extinction of endless sleep! We think of Thomas Huxley still urging forward his undaunted way in pursuit of truth where truth is found in all its splendor and harmony. Thus thinking, we can affirm:

> "Doubtless unto thee is given
> A life that bears immortal fruit
> In those great offices that suit
> The full-grown energies of heaven." [1]

[1] Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, XL.

THIRD LECTURE

JOHN STUART MILL

"Laws should be adapted to those who have the heaviest stake in the country; for whom government means, not mortified pride or stinted luxury, but want and pain and degradation and risk to their own lives and to their children's souls."

LORD ACTON.

JOHN STUART MILL

THE period covered by the end of the eighteenth and the opening years of the nineteenth centuries was remarkable for the impetus given to society by new forces, new ideas, and new conceptions of life. Wordsworth, then a youth of nineteen, was swept into the vortex; and in later times, notwithstanding his growing conservatism, he refers to the stirring and eventful epoch in the familiar lines of the *Excursion:*

> "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
> But to be young was very heaven."

The mighty deeps were broken up, and flood-tides of emotion bore forward on their crest every kind of talent and genius in human affairs. The shock of this huge disturbance had scarcely died away, when there appeared a series of prophets, poets, teachers, reformers, and statesmen whose main burden was the reconstruction of the social order. The Roman Church resumed its plea for reactionary and traditional opinions. The sons of the new liberalism urged the same reconciliation of forces, but demanded that it rest on the basis of radical reform. The defenders of hereditary rank and aristocratic privilege preserved, as best

they could, the remnant of their feudal tenure. While France was the center from which the conflict waged, it extended throughout Europe and North America.

John Stuart Mill was essentially a son of this movement, and his life and work are best examined, at least in their initial stages, in the light of his affinities with the thinkers of the time. Frederic Harrison describes him as "the systematic product of a singularly systematic school of philosophers";[1] and, so far as his British intellectual ancestry is concerned, the description is correct. He imbibed the teaching of John Locke and David Hume, who, more than any other men, dispelled from the world of English thought the somber shadow cast upon it by the melancholy tendencies of Puritanism. He stood midway between the Benthamite and Spencerian types of philosophy, and was their most important link of connection. He insisted on a logical deduction from observation and experiment, and challenged all social and political theories which could not justify themselves in the forum of reason. Whether for good or ill, his work betrays a unique blending of French and English ideas, and Walter Bagehot deems this combination Mill's great merit as a writer. In his logic, theories which before were widely apart, are found in juxtaposition; and thirteen are named

[1] *Tennyson, Ruskin, and Mill*, p. 272.

in the same sentence where one could hardly have comprehended their being coupled together. The ancient and modern methods of scholastic or scientific inference were never before set so completely side by side, nor made so fully to illustrate one another. Such a task requires the delicate shades of expository art, and for this Mill was equipped by both gifts and culture. He inherited a philosophical acumen from his father, and his residence in France had imparted the art of precise and graceful explanation. He seems to have been a compound of Bentham and Auguste Comte. In him the argumentation and sterling sense of the former were quickened and illumined by the idealism of the latter.

I

The family of Mill came originally from the slopes of the Perthshire Grampians, a region noted for the growth of keen thinkers and ardent disputants. His father, James Mill, received the best education his frugal parents could procure and Scotland could offer. After graduating at Montrose Academy the elder Mill became a tutor in a private family, and moved with the household to Edinburgh, where he entered upon a course of study at the University. Among the friends he found there were John Leyden, David Brewster, and Lord Brougham. At the age of twenty-nine he be-

gan his well-known literary career in London. Here he underwent severe struggles and hardships, which were finally relieved by his appointment to the East India Company's service in that city, an office in which both he and his son spent their professional lives. When thirty-one he married Harriet Burrow, a lady of generous nature and refined tastes. The union was not a particularly happy one. Mrs. Mill was unsuited for his exacting intellectual disposition, and her husband was too absorbed in his philosophical and literary pursuits properly to discharge the duties of domestic life. Their eldest child, John Stuart, was born on May 20, 1806. From infancy he was subjected to a carefully prepared and rigorous curriculum, every detail of which was predetermined, and the goal as carefully defined. The father never spared himself, and he had no notion of sparing others. His austerities were only ameliorated by the largeness of his public views, and his repressed, but undoubted sympathy with the causes which made for social betterment. He held the doctrine that a sound organization would banish evils from the State, and that a thorough system of education would do the same for the individual. He displayed no enthusiasm in those stoical ambitions; in his opinion, once the freshness of youth and satisfied curiosity had subsided, "human life was a poor thing at best." Passion and emotion were regarded by

him as forms of madness, and the *intense* was a byword of scorn. He advocated the restriction of the private affections and the expansion of altruistic zeal to the utmost. He accepted the dicta of his cult, that men are born alike, and that every child's mind is a *tabula rasa* on which experience registers its impressions. In harmony with this conception, education was, of course, the formative factor in determining life and shaping character. It should begin with the dawn of consciousness, and be prosecuted without stint. How absolutely James Mill endorsed these views is evident from the methods he adopted in training his eldest son.

There have been few more pathetic juvenile histories than that of John Stuart Mill. The story is a strange one; and were it not so well substantiated, doubts as to its accuracy would be legitimate. It has been received with feelings of amazement, mingled with those of sympathy and indignation. Despite the fact that his temperament was highly emotional and even religiously inclined, he was early compelled to face life from the purely intellectual standpoint. Before he was sufficiently mature to register a protest, his father forced him outside the pale of all sentiment, and charged him with the insolence of a philosophical system which had no limitations. Such hard and metallic treatment robbed the son of any opportunity to develop

and understand the romantic side of his nature. Many of the sorrows that beset his career can be traced to this well-nigh unpardonable error.

He tells us in his autobiography that when he was two years old he was able to read; at three he commenced Greek; at seven he had gone through the whole of Herodotus, Xenophon's *Cyropædeia*, the memorials of Socrates, part of Lucian, and some of the lives of the philosophers by Diogenes Läertius; at eight he knew the first six *Dialogues* of Plato. In addition to these classics, studied in the original, he was made to extend his course to the English historians and essayists, a knowledge of whom was held necessary to the completion of the astounding scheme. Robertson, Hume, Millar, Mosheim, M'Crie, and Sewell were read by this child before he had reached his tenth year. Macaulay's phenomenal precociousness was altogether outdone. Even so, his father was still dissatisfied, and thrust upon him further labors which were simply impossible. In our day, when the discipline of youth has been considerably relaxed, the prodigious achievements of young Mill may well appear incredible; but Professor Bain assures us that the amount of work done has been underestimated. At eight he was appointed schoolmaster to the younger members of the family, a post which he states was more educative to his mind than helpful to his manners. The Draconian father applied

his theories to the little Mills who were just out of the cradle, and vicariously operated upon them through the monitorship of their eldest brother. It is not an attractive picture; and to add to its painfulness, Jeremy Bentham offered his services in carrying out the scheme so far as John Stuart was concerned. He pledged himself to see it through "by whipping or otherwise." To this the elder Mill replied, "I take your offer seriously, and we may perhaps leave him a worthy successor of us both." They do not appear to have regarded the child as a human being at all; but as a living peg on which to hang their system of education and exhibit its advantages to posterity. The differential calculus and other branches of the higher mathematics were assigned him before he was thirteen. Geometry, algebra, logic, Latin, treatises on scholasticism, and the study of the *Organon* were included in the same period. He observed later that he profited little by the *Posterior Analytics*. Certainly loss was mingled with gain in this varied and astonishing program; but it was ruthlessly pushed forward, regardless of future mischief. Strangely enough young Mill was not so unhappy in all this as might be supposed. He became accustomed to his captivity; his daily walks with his father, during which they discussed political economy, were more or less anticipated. These peripatetic discourses had to be reproduced in written

form on the following morning. A high standard of clearness and correctness was enforced, and the results were palpable in those literary talents which were most useful to one who became so comprehensive a philosopher. He acquired habits which were much strengthened in after life, and especially during his association with the youthful propagandists of the Utilitarian Society. These habits were "never to accept half solutions of difficulties as complete; never to abandon a puzzling question, but to return to it again and again, until it was manifest; never to allow obscure corners of a debated issue to remain unexplored because they did not appear important; never to think he understood any part of a subject unless he understood the whole."[1]

Whatever the youth's feelings were, his endurance was beyond praise, and there is no hint that he faltered while passing through this premature forging process. He brought to it a splendid physique, a resolute will, and an awe of his father which made him obedient to his lightest word. He was encouraged by the example of those strong and wholesome characters which had overcome formidable obstacles. This acquiescence, with the general plan for his advancement, profoundly influenced his afterlife. His mind was disciplined, if not to perfection, certainly to a high range of efficiency.

[1] *Autobiography*, p. 123.

And while many thinkers and several of his contemporaries were more eminent for originality and constructive talent, none surpassed Mill in the amplitude of his general knowledge, the diversity and scope of his intellectual pursuits, and his invaluable faculty for fusing together rich but fragmentary phases of thought. He understood, as few did, the importance of evidence, and developed those gifts of concentration which made him a mental analyst of the first order. A laudable and sincere ambition was kindled in him to follow in the footsteps of men who had consecrated themselves to the public good. These were valuable acquisitions, and, on the whole, it seems probable that the interminable round of study and effort was well adapted to his capacities.

In his fifteenth year he won a brief respite, which was spent in the south of France. Freed from his father's overweening presence, surrounded by congenial society and in full view of the impressive scenery of the Pyrenees, it was here he felt the first warm rays which thawed his glacial youth. His subsequent familiarity with the French thought and language was the best outcome of this sojourn abroad. If he caught a little, though only a little, of the tendency to diffuseness of the French philosophers, he also gained their translucent style and wonderful readability. Before he returned to England, in 1821, he added zoology, chemistry, botany,

and metaphysics to the list of his acquirements, and found recreation in music and dancing. In 1823 he entered the service of the East India Company, where his duties, though onerous, were not allowed to interfere with his literary work. The reading of Dumont's interpretation of Benthamism in the *Traité de Législation* effected an astounding change in Mill's outlook on life. He laid down the last volume with the feeling that he was literally "converted." "I now had opinions," he cried, "a creed, a doctrine, a philosophy; in one among the best senses of the word, a religion; the inculcation and diffusion of which could be made the principal outward purpose of a life. And I had a grand conception laid before me of changes to be effected in the condition of mankind through that doctrine."[1] To those who have regarded Mill as a cold and calculating rationalist, this spontaneous confession may be surprising. But if we reflect on the abnormalities that have been depicted, was it not to be expected? Here was a very young man excessively nurtured in intellect and starved in emotion, who had suddenly found mental and moral employment for his neglected sympathies. He preached immediately his radiant gospel of the greatest happiness of the greatest number. With all the ardor of a regenerate he turned to find others of a like persuasion. The Utilitarian Society

[1] *Autobiography*, p. 67.

was founded to embody these purposes; it consisted of young men more or less acquainted with Bentham, and who therefore might be the more readily imbued with the spirit and aims of his teaching. To many of these, both then and afterward, Mill was not so much a thinker or a political economist, as a prophet. "He had rare power of arguing and analyzing"; but what is still more uncommon, he had "an equally rare kind of contagious enthusiasm, which influenced a multitude of minds, and made them believe as he did."[1]

From the period of this awakening can be dated his productive work. After a prolonged course of reading he began to contribute to the *Traveller*, the *Chronicle*, the *Westminster Review*, and other organs of philosophical radicalism, and in 1825 he edited Bentham's work on *Evidence*. These preliminary ventures in authorship considerably improved his style. He showed that microscopic ability which detects the minutest breach or incoherence in the tissue of opposed reasoning, and also a clear conception of what he himself meant to convey. His attitude impresses the reader as earnest and convinced, and withal gentle and modest. But this halcyon state was soon disturbed. He began to drift from the certainty of his beliefs, and in the autumn of 1826 a painful reaction followed on his new-found yet

[1] Bagehot's *Essay on Mill* (*Works*, Vol. V, p. 417).

short-lived joy. His mutilated childhood, combined with his sanguine attempt to establish reason as the sole guide of life, thus effecting a social and economic revolution, were revenged by a series of dark and depressing experiences which well-nigh overwhelmed him. Psychologically they indicated the backward swing of the pendulum from his untimely zeal. Actually they centered around certain abnormal obsessions which distract the disappointed and disenchanted spirits whose ideals have melted into thin air. He vexed himself over the possible exhaustibility of musical combinations, and when rid of this annoyance suffered from others equally futile and wearying. Then came defiance against the gods in whose service he had been commandeered. Sudden misgivings and agonizing doubts flashed upon him, which he compares to a Methodist "conviction of sin." His implicit and complacent trust in his philosophical evangel was rudely shattered, and his mission to upraise a world of which he was woefully ignorant was abandoned in despair. For an interval everything on which he had depended tottered and seemed about to fall. He deeply realized that, if all his objects in life could be attained at that moment, the result would give him no lasting satisfaction. He says with melancholy emphasis, "At this my heart sank within me; the whole foundation on which my life was constructed fell down.

All my happiness was to have been found in the continual pursuit of this end. The end had ceased to charm; and how could there ever again be an interest in the means? I seemed to have nothing left to live for." These gloomy reflections prostrated him. He quotes Coleridge's lines from *Dejection* as exactly describing his case:

> "A grief without a pang, void, dark and drear,
> A drowsy, stifled, unimpassioned grief,
> Which finds no natural outlet or relief
> In word, or sigh, or tear." [1]

Some one has compared Condorcet to a volcano covered with snow. To a certain extent the comparison holds true of Mill; and this was the first eruption, to be followed by others even more destructive. The ill-regulated fires beneath at last blazed forth in unexpected and disastrous ways. What availed his father's regimen and the bold and heartless efforts to stifle in him the higher qualities of humanity? The unhappy sequel could scarcely have been other than it was; we may perhaps repress ourselves, but no one else can attempt it with impunity. He recovered himself by reading Marmontel's *Mémoires;* and a little later the poetry of Wordsworth came to him with the strength and comfort of a revelation. Over the first book he shed tears, it gave fluidity to

[1] *Autobiography*, p. 134.

the deeper feelings of his soul; while the second showed him the place which feeling occupies, not only in the social relationships, but as a guide to the understanding of the human heart. He now saw that pleasure did not depend on an opposition of interests between men. The static theory of a limited amount of happiness was not in harmony with the facts of life, since one man's pleasures do not necessarily interfere with those of another. This was an important moment in his life — the moment when he realized, by Wordsworth's aid, that independent yet real pleasure is afforded by the contemplation of nature and of the heart of man. He began to live the life of emotion, and, treading this unaccustomed road, for which he had received so little preparation, it is not astonishing that he fell into a snare.

His introduction to the well-known Mrs. Taylor resulted in an intimacy which separated Mill from his highest self, and caused division in his family as well as anxiety to his friends. Despite continued remonstrance he persisted in this detrimental compact. The Nemesis which followed so indiscreet an episode exacted a heavy toll from the man, his work, and his influence. After twenty years the death of the forbearing husband left his widow free to marry her admirer. But the bitterest consequences were destined to fall upon Mill's patient and long-suffering mother, whom he does not

once mention in his autobiography. He displayed toward this unfortunate lady and her children an implacable spirit of retaliation for their supposed neglect of his belated bride, and on his part arose an immovable reserve which he never relaxed. This deplorable aversion destroyed the peace of the domestic circle in which he had been an affectionate son and an open-handed brother. Miss Taylor, the granddaughter of Mrs. Taylor, has urged all that can be said on behalf of Mill and his wife. She naturally is anxious to vindicate his conduct; but candor compels her to admit that "Mill's letters to his own family are, too many of them, painful, though strangely interesting, reading. He cannot, by the most wounding reproaches, shake their faith in him as a 'great and good man.' He seems to endeavor to do this, but fails. They recognize that he is cruel and insulting to them, and they suffer acutely; but their affection is as invincible as his resentment. It is wonderful to see a whole family thus loving and enduring. Not one bitter word is flung back to him. One sees that he reigns in all their hearts. A marvel of cruelty; yet how deep and rich must the nature be that can so reign in spite of all! As one reads one feels less anger with him than deep love and admiration for those brave women who seem to consider in each scornful word only the wound from which it springs, and

which they perpetually seek to find and heal."[1]

The views of two eminent critics, belonging to widely different schools, may be cited here. Lord Morley described Mill years ago as "true to his professions, tolerant, liberal, unselfish, single-minded, high, and strenuous."[2] Sir William Robertson Nicoll, in a recent review of Mill's *Letters* in the *British Weekly*, affirms that, while there was nothing technically immoral in the Taylor incident, "it was selfishness in its purest or impurest form, it turns many of Mill's books to folly . . . and was a sad and sorry entanglement." Morley's eulogy is too silvery; but it may be subjected to revision when the promised Life of Mill appears. Certainly the biographer of Gladstone cannot allow Miss Taylor's remarks to pass without notice. Those now living who knew Mill personally dwell with one accord on his goodness of nature and devotion to the public service. Nor can it be doubted that for sagacity of mind, political and social fervor, and substantial contributions to economic reforms, he will always be rightly esteemed.

Following the separation from his family, Mill and his wife withdrew almost entirely from society. They made their home near Avignon, and the death of Mrs. Mill was the

[1] *Letters of John Stuart Mill: Introduction*, Vol. I, p. 46.
[2] *Miscellanies* (fourth series), p. 146.

crowning calamity which severed him altogether from England. He dedicated his essay *On Liberty* to her memory, declaring that in this, as in many other of his writings, she was a partner in their projection and execution. After a brief illness he died at Avignon on May 8, 1873. His decease, which came suddenly, created a deep sense of loss in the intellectual life of Britain, France, and America. Few thinkers exercised more influence or inspired so much personal attachment among those who formed the inner retinues of philosophy and social betterment. "A strong, pure light has gone out, the radiance of a clear vision and a beneficent purpose. We have lost a great teacher and example of knowledge and virtue." So wrote his greatest living disciple, and he expressed the sentiments of a distinguished coterie of thinkers and literary masters.

II

Mill's writings are not collections of desultory remarks; they are orderly and systematic discussions on absorbing themes which permit no deviations. Their beginnings have reference to their conclusions, and almost every part has some relation, and frequently a close one, to most other parts. Subjects like metaphysics, logic, and political economy will not brook outside interference; the whole time and strength of a thinker and a scholar must usually be given

to these jealous mistresses. Yet Mill wrote his books when he was a laborious man of business who had difficult and exhausting duties to perform. When the circumstances of their production are fully known, their meritorious character is increased.

In his philosophy he defines matter as "the permanent possibility of sensation," and mind as the "permanent possibility of feeling." The so-called primary truths or innate ideas are only habits of mind which time and repetition have rendered irresistible. Experience is the sole source of knowledge, and the mind derives its entire fund of materials through the senses; *a priori* and intuitive elements of every kind are absolutely rejected; the mind contributes nothing out of itself to the structure of knowledge. Mill went so far as to deny the principle of contradiction. We are not even sure that we are not sure. When Hume conceded the necessary truth of the axioms of Euclid, Mill rebelled against the concession, and avowed that "there might be another planet in which two and two make five." According to him, sensations and feelings are the component parts of experience and also the units of the mental life. "My mind is but a series of feelings," he remarks, "a thread of consciousness, however supplemented by believed possibilities of consciousness, which are not, though they might be realized." Empha-

sis is laid on the association of ideas by means of which the mind is furnished with the falsely termed "intuitions" or "necessary truths." He would not admit the existence of a conscious self as a centrality in itself; the fundamental ego was a delusion, and consisted of a succession of feelings, and psychical states. Although Mill disliked the inference and tried to avoid it, these views were closely affiliated with necessitarianism. "An act of will," quoting from his standpoint, "is a moral effect which follows the corresponding moral causes as certainly and invariably as physical effects follow their physical causes." In these statements, which cover Mill's general attitude toward the vital problems of human existence, one cannot fail to notice his assumptions in the use of certain words such as "background," "succession," and the like. In fact, his terminology is fertile in controversies because of its looseness, a looseness which has been banished from the more critical philosophies of our own time.

Despite the qualified support of Spencer and Leslie Stephen, this attack on the integrity and reality of mind as the nexus of personality has now largely spent its force. It attempted to undermine the intelligent basis for experience, notwithstanding that on experience the Utilitarians rested their whole case. From it alone they endeavored to deduce the laws and necessities of the mental and moral life. The process

reminds one of Hogarth's caricature of the man intent on sawing off his rival's sign, while he himself is perched on the outer edge oblivious of the coming crash. No satisfactory explanation is given of the unity of consciousness which is presupposed in every form of mental activity. Apart from that unity, such self-evident functions of mind as discrimination and combination are altogether impossible, and the mind itself, reduced to a mere series of feelings, is destroyed as a real agent. Mill seems to ignore the fact that any rational experience directly implies a conscious unitary subject. A further defect in his system is its leaning toward, if not its direct association with, the determinism to which reference has already been made. For if cause and effect obtain in the moral realm as in the physical, a mortal blow is given to ethical freedom, and personal responsibility is annulled. Professor Sheldon has demonstrated how both Mill and Spencer, in their oscillations between materialism and idealism, have frequently been compelled to recognize that personality the existence of which they sought to disprove. For an instance of this, take the admission of Mill: "There is a bond of some sort among all the parts of the series, . . . and this bond constitutes my ego." As Sheldon points out, the "bond of some sort" is the trap-door which Mill unwittingly opened in the floor of his own philos-

ophy, through which his principal tenet promptly disappeared.[1]

The qualitative distinction between one form of gratification and another was a further and fatal error in the Utilitarian system, and also a virtual challenge of its entire ethical position. For Bentham push-pin was as good as poetry, provided it afforded equal pleasure. But Mill could not go so far as this; he rated some pleasures higher than others. Indeed, the intellectual pleasures made the strongest appeal to him: it is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied.[2] We heartily echo the plea; but Mill could not make it and remain a consistent Utilitarian. It requires a moral sense to determine what pleasures are high and what are low, and to differentiate between the Socratic and the foolish pursuits. His observation also involves the displacement of pleasure as the standard and end in itself. It is interesting to note that Paley was the first teacher who used the Utilitarian philosophy as a basis for Christian ethics. His system was harmful, and has been rightly called "other-world selfishness." But while thoroughly discounted by modern theologians, it still sways the average man to a regrettable extent. He defined virtue as the doing of good to mankind

[1] See Professor Sheldon's admirable work on *Unbelief in the Nineteenth Century*.

[2] Mill's *Utilitarianism*, pp. 11 ff.

in obedience to the will of God and for the sake of everlasting happiness. Thus, while virtue springs from self-seeking, its *sanction* is in the will of God allied with future reward or punishment. Utilitarianism proper differs from Paleyism on the one question of the *sanction*. Its ethics are never a matter of obligation, but are absolutely governed by selfish and social considerations. Even the altruistic aspects are caused by self-love, and the greatest happiness of the greatest number is adjusted to this main position. When Bentham, who was given to generosity, was asked how in such actions he could be self-centered, his reply was that "he was a selfish man whose selfishness happened to take the form of benevolence." In another passage he says, "Self-regard alone will serve for diet, although sympathy is very good for dessert."

For Mill the problem was more difficult, and he was not quite so assured on the issue. He knew no reason why the general happiness was desirable, except that each person desired his own happiness. Each person's happiness was a good to that person, and the general happiness a good to the aggregate of persons. Carlyle chuckled over this lame logic, and revealed its absurdity by a characteristically vigorous analogy. "It is," he says, "as if we were to argue that because each pig desires for himself the greatest amount of a limited quantity of pigs'

wash, each necessarily desires the greatest quantity for every other and for all." Later Utilitarians, without any admiration for Carlyle's somewhat uncouth retort, have felt equally dissatisfied with Mill's reasoning. They renounce the dogma that personal pleasure is the one desirable thing, and urge that we ought to aim at universal happiness according to reason. They do not, however, sufficiently explain the authority of reason or why we should obey its behests. Leslie Stephen toyed with the notion that happiness is the end, and that the happiness of the individual and that of others normally coincide; yet they are different, and we can never be sure they are one and will follow the same path. But what if the end is not properly described as happiness? Suppose it is well-being or good? Stephen himself suggests that the connection between the individual and social good is not sentiment, but a matter of reasoning. On the ground that man is a rational being, incapable of finding satisfaction in gratified feeling, capable only of self-realization in a common good, we are justified in setting aside all arguments based on the comparison of pleasures. Having done so much as this, we can appeal with confident directness to man's sense of duty. The emotional nature in men furnishes no ground of authority for ethics. The rational nature does so, and does it in all realms. When we say to a man, "This is right," we cannot

invariably add, "This will be for your happiness"; but we can affirm, "It is reasonable and obligatory." It may entail suffering and deprivation, yet it must be obeyed at all hazards. Apart from his rational self, which is essentially social, there could be no such obligation, no "thou shalt" or "thou shalt not," and no morality as now accepted and built upon by civilized society.[1] Though the English Utilitarians have been discredited in their own circle, this should not blind us to the wide acceptance of their views by thoughtless multitudes who know no philosophy, but who eagerly seize upon hedonistic teachings as an excuse for personal advantage and self-indulgence. Utilitarian doctrines have received another and less reputable application in our present revel of so-called prosperity. Many who never heard of Bentham, Hume, and the Mills make pleasure the sole end of being; and the madness of this pursuit has already inflicted widespread injury and loss upon the American and English peoples. Any creditable exposition of the fundamental weakness of this vaunted policy is a grateful resistance against a prevalent evil whose ravages must be checked or our racial value will decrease.

The age of Mill, as already noted, was one of intellectual and political unrest, a time of doubt, perplexity, and hesitation. Thinkers were prin-

[1] See Muirhead's *Ethics*, p. 157.

cipally concerned to discover the meaning of the moral code under which they lived, and the authority which lay behind it. Finding nothing save contradictions, the Benthamites resolved to begin afresh, and their unflinching application of reason led them to a complete abandonment of the current ethical systems. Thus deprived of the assistance of the past, they naturally concentrated attention on themselves as the one indisputable reality. Here it was they met an adverse fate, because they made a misleading and unworthy reckoning of human nature. This doomed them to failure, as it has also seriously damaged those theological systems which have been guilty of the same error. Their ambition rightly to interpret the perennial problem of man, his meaning and purpose in the world, was a laudable one; but their low and distorted notions concerning him thwarted its fulfilment.

Jeremy Bentham gave his attention to jurisprudence, James Mill centered on psychology, John Stuart Mill expounded a new political economy. But behind these efforts the belittling estimate of their fellow creatures crippled their main enterprises; and while their work has borne fruit in many directions, it warns us that a dignified and sufficient doctrine of man's essential nobility must lie at the foundation of all speculation or action which proposes the betterment of the race. They shared in the

practical drift of British philosophy, which bore traces of the national temperament and was generally averse to any thinking that was not pragmatic in its tendency. They rendered yeoman service by bringing man back to himself, and their domestic principles made Utilitarianism an effective instrument of political reform. They assumed the equality of all men, and based their calculations upon that assumption. In nations dominated by caste and privilege, such a principle was specially welcome. It was this advocacy of equal rights, and not their contention that the end is pleasure, which secured many social and legislative advantages.

In the nineteenth century the stream of reforming thought was swollen by three great currents which flowed into it. These were the ethical, the metaphysical, and the scientific. They arose at different times; and in Germany and France, as well as in Britain and America, they gave an almost unprecedented significance to the era in which they found their confluence. The first began in Sensationalism, eddied in Utilitarianism, and was swept forward by the pressure of new truths the other two contained. James Mill and his son gave ethical Utilitarianism its authoritative form; but, despite this, it steadily dwindled, and, after the death of John Stuart, ceased to be a large factor in individual or social ethics. The system which regarded the world of humanity as an aggregate of de-

tached units, a collection of mere individuals, with nothing in common save their natural sensuous necessities, who repelled each other by their selfish greed, was an offense against the highest instincts of our being and led to naked naturalism. Political economy supplanted ethics, psychology outgeneraled metaphysics, and religion wallowed in the slough of self-desire. Carlyle sturdily rebuked these defections. He testified to the presence of God in the spirit of man, and looked upon this life through the transfiguring light of another and a loftier world. Penetrating the husk of time, he saw that eternity was here and now, "a tranquil element underlying the heated antagonisms of man's existence." "This theory," he exclaimed, speaking of Utilitarianism, "should make us go on all fours and lay no claim at all to the dignity of being moral." Within its confines man had no history as he had no future, no power either of ascent or descent. He was simply a human animal glutted with present demands and the efforts to satisfy them. It presented no ideals which could raise man above his natural selfhood or lead him to sacrifice the lower for the higher. He was pitiably reduced to an object, a *thing* affected by other things as they pained or pleased him, and acting, like any other object, in obedience to motives that had an external origin in the world of sense. These were the maunderings which provoked Carlyle's

ire. "Is the heroic inspiration we name Virtue but some Passion; some bubble of the blood, bubbling in the direction others *profit* by? . . . If what thou namest Happiness be our true aim, then are we all astray. With Stupidity and sound Digestion man may front much. But what, in these dull unimaginative days, are the terrors of Conscience to the diseases of the Liver! Not on Morality, but on Cookery, let us build our stronghold: there brandishing our frying-pan, as censer, let us offer sweet incense to the Devil, and live at ease on the fat things *he* has provided for his Elect!"[1]

In Germany Hume's appeal to the world of the five senses had long ceased to charm reflective minds. A noble succession of poets and philosophers emulated one another in brushing aside the conclusions of the empiricists. They demolished the Deism which encouraged notions of an absentee God, and reinvested His universe with the splendors of a spiritual significance. The infinite and finite elements in man and nature were reiterated by Kant and Lessing, Fichte and Schiller, Goethe and Hegel. Metaphysics were reëstablished upon a larger and firmer basis, psychology took a subordinate place, and the entire creation was viewed by them as pulsating with the mystery and majesty of endless life and purpose. In England Words-

[1] Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, Chap. VII, p. 112, Edinburgh edition.

worth and Browning joined with Carlyle in directing this cleansing idealism toward popular channels. Later thinkers, such as the brothers Caird and T. H. Green, expounded and supplemented Hegelianism, imparting to it the warmth and directness of their own moral enthusiasm. Lotze's monumental achievements, which combine the best features of his predecessors, complete the history of this second current in the stream of modern thought, to which also the kindred religious philosophy of James Martineau contributed, coinciding with the more cosmic range of the German master.

Again, the advent of evolution, with its immense range of biological facts, on which Spencer built his synthetic philosophy, was inimical to the Utilitarian degradation of man. The defects of Spencer's teaching were many and obvious, and they have been trenchantly handled by Professor Bowne. But one thing that teaching did: it showed conclusively that man was not an isolated unit; that he had a princely inheritance from an interminable past, whose recesses were beyond discernment, and whose dauntless energies were concentrated in him. More than this, an equally irresistible energy propelled him toward an infinite future whose possibilities challenged imagination. The two organic ideas of evolutionary philosophy, which were the solidarity of the race and its vital union with all created phenomena,

crushed the stark individualism of the school of Mill.

While by the middle of the nineteenth century Utilitarianism was absorbed in the general stream of philosophy, John Stuart Mill's political economy has persisted to the present hour. The subject had already been very ably dealt with in detail by Adam Smith and Ricardo; but no writer before Mill had surveyed it with anything like such catholicity or sympathy. No one had shown with the same comprehensiveness and fascinating comparison "the relation which the different parts of the science bore to each other; still less had any one so well explained the relation of this science to other sciences and to knowledge in general."[1] He brought to this eminent field all his peculiar powers; and while the book possesses little originality, it banishes the idea that the "dismal science" must needs be held in a narrow-minded or pedantic way.

Indeed, Mill's receptivity and varied treatment laid him open to the charge of inconsistency, and his critics pointed to the excited emotions which frequently dictated his discourse. Abstract dogmas on unlimited individualism were followed by an idealism which nullified them. He forsook logical order to dilate upon the golden prospects of a millennial future. Mill acknowledged the justice of the

[1] Bagehot's *Essay on Mill* (*Works*, Vol. V, p. 415).

criticism, and explained his lapse by attributing these ideals to Saint-Simon, the distinguished philosopher who was more or less prominent in the politics of his country. Professor Cousin of the Sorbonne and Auguste Comte aided Saint-Simon in deflecting Mill from orthodox Benthamism. The founder of Positivism combined with his reasoning on economics a serious attempt to expand the sociology of his day into a more coördinated form. Mill reveals the results of his intercourse with these lucid and persuasive writers, whose precise and graceful explanations were extremely attractive to him. But his gifts for weaving diversified matter into a unified whole were embarrassed by the wealth of his material. Either he lacked the reflective strength which could adequately deal with his enormous knowledge, or else he could not extricate himself from his inherited materialism. He stood at the crossroads where fierce winds blew from every quarter; but he stood so weighted down with his father's creed that no particular breeze could bear him along. The strange intermingling of Scotch common sense and Gallican political rapture, to which reference has been made, colored many of his utterances, and caused men of opposite parties to appeal to these diverse elements in support of their widely different theories. Even the socialists of our day and not without some show of reason have laid claim to him.

This universality may help to account for his monarchical influence. All students of political economy during his day began with Mill, and went only to other writers for confirmation of his views. Mr. Bagehot states that they saw the science through his eyes, and that his preëminence among his contemporaries was so complete as to be at times of doubtful benefit. Mill had been taught to look upon labor as painful, and economic effort as belonging to the disagreeable; but John Sterling and other friends showed him that the pleasures involved far outweighed the pains. A new ideal of social progress possessed him, and he made plans for its realization. He speaks of political economy and physical science as though no others existed, and for him political economy had become moral science because all social, political, psychical, and moral considerations influence the creation of wealth. His father drew an analogy between the political economy of the State and the domestic economy of the family. The first embraced everything relative to public affairs while the second included all things of a private character. The last was a miniature of the first, and the State should be regulated on a domestic basis of equality of work and profit.

John Stuart Mill went farther, and regarded political economy as "the science relating to the moral or psychological laws of the produc-

tion and distribution of wealth."[1] Mental and moral phenomena are thus brought within the scope of economic inquiry. He also traces the laws of society from the concerted efforts of men for the production of wealth. His purpose in writing was to give a new setting to the teachings of Ricardo and Adam Smith. Much that is best in these writers is absorbed by him and reinterpreted in a more attractive way. Not a little of the merit of the work, however, lies in his special contributions on the themes of society and civilization. Many modern works on social problems bear marked traces of his method of treatment and of his opinions. It may be said that, under the influence of the Comtian philosophy, he elevated political economy above the phenomena of environment, and set it forth as a new species of idealism. After his masterly treatment of the science, it was taken from the region of mere abstraction and given practical form and applicability for concrete life.

It would be beside the question to discuss at any length Mill's *Logic*, as books of such a nature do well, provided they serve their day and generation. This his *Logic* did, quite as well as Whately's, and the temporary influence of its almost universal scope was enormous. Grote wrote in the *Westminster Review* as long

[1] See Professor Patten's *Development of English Thought*, pp. 323 ff.

ago as January, 1866, and termed it "the most important advance in speculative theory which the century had witnessed." This verdict has since undergone material modification, and so eminent an authority as the late Professor Stanley Jevons affirms that the inconsistencies of the book show Mill's mind to be essentially illogical. But no one will deny that seldom in the history of philosophy have two books so learned, so thorough, and so far-reaching been written with greater scholarship, more skilful capacity, or higher aims. Upon the *Logic* as much as upon the *Political Economy* and the essay *On Liberty* Mill's greatness as a thinker and writer must continue to rest. And while the subjects with which they deal are too full of the contentions and differences brought about by the growth of knowledge and the necessities of change to enable any man to be a permanent authority upon them, assent will be given to some of Mill's conclusions for many years to come.[1]

III

Social and religious questions form an integral part of Mill's philosophy; indeed, they occupy a paramount place in the teaching of most nineteenth-century leaders of thought. That three such leaders as Mill, Carlyle, and Newman should have lived at the same time

[1] Bagehot's *Essay on Mill* (*Works*, Vol. V, pp. 412–417).

is, to Leslie Stephen, a remarkable occurrence. All were philosophers after a fashion; they sought the same end in the good of society; but each attempted its achievement in very different ways. Leaving Newman out of account, the contrast is between Mill and Carlyle. The former differed from the latter in that he was the studied product of a school to whose ideas he gave a new development and application. While Carlyle hurled accusations against society to the very end, Mill, who was supposed at the first to occupy the same platform, became the prophet of better things, and sought to improve the condition of the masses Carlyle despised. Two great moral beliefs are indispensable for the work of a teacher or reformer: he must believe in the reality of his message, and he must also believe in its acceptability. It was the secret of Carlyle's tragedy that he held the first and not the second; he had a Calvinistic depth of conviction concerning the truths he uttered, but, alas! he had no confidence in men's sure response — *they were mostly fools.* When Mill wrote his *Letters* on *The Spirit of the Age*, Carlyle exclaimed, "Here is a new mystic." These *Letters* advocate unanimity in the methods of arriving at conclusions in political or social problems. By unanimity Mill meant what Arnold afterward desired for literature as set forth in his essay on *A French Eton.* Every progressive science de-

pends on such an agreement among its experts; therefore, why should not these social difficulties, the solution of which means so much to the nation's well-being, be similarly determined? This is what Mill meant by "social science." To him it was capable of an exactitude equal to that of natural science; it included correct diagnoses and proper remedies, which were calculated to advance civilization, and rid it of its many evils. The ignorance and uncertainty concerning even the very rudiments of social problems showed the crying need of an ordered investigation. But Mill's efforts failed, as did his attempt to form a Radical party in Parliament. The failure, however, was only temporary; for his work gave to reform the inestimable benefit of a good advertisement, and modern social ethics owe to him more than has yet been determined. The steady expansion of the emotional side of his nature, for which Mrs. Taylor's companionship was responsible, was manifest in his increasing sympathy with the plain people. "The human element" he claims was due to her, and as he contemplated the condemnation of thousands of laborers to a wretched and cramped existence, and thousands more to semi-starvation, the hideous spectacle haunted him day and night. Hatred of oppression of any sort was a fire in his bones. His suppressed wrath can be felt as he recounts the tyrannical brutalities of man

to woman and the recklessness shown by men and women to helpless animals.

These evils could only be suppressed by a thorough reformation of economic conditions and a wise and judicial administration of an exalted democracy. In order to acquaint himself with the entire situation he made a minute study of the literature of sociology; and though he was no sectarian, he was not finally opposed to socialism. Rather than permit the present condition to continue he would have preferred socialism as the lesser evil. He says, "The social problem of the future [will be] how to unite the greatest individual liberty of action with a common ownership in the raw material of the globe, and an equal participation of all in the benefits of combined labor."[1] But he recognized that socialism would utterly fail unless supplied with a high type of character, and that so long as men continued to allow their political beliefs to be actuated by their individual interests rather than by the general welfare they were not fitted for socialism in practise. He always looked to education as the chief means of raising them to this disinterested level, but his opinions fluctuated as to the speedy realization of this end. At the close of his life he was less sanguine in his estimate of the interval that must elapse before democracy could wisely adapt itself to such a far-reaching adjustment.

[1] *Autobiography*, p. 232.

This loss of confidence was caused by the unworthy attitude of a large portion of the British public toward the Civil War in America.[1] Mill was no demagogue. He could and did unflinchingly resist the tumultuous tyranny which usurps the true function of democracy. He pleaded for the latter as a form of government, because in his opinion politics were highly educative to the mass of the people. He, however, was aware of its dangers, and insisted on minorities being represented in legislative bodies. The Radicalism he promoted was a protest against the privileges of oligarchical rule on the one hand and the tumult of mob law on the other; and he flung his trained energies into the protest, to such advantage, that to-day we see in England a triumphant democracy trying its prentice-hand at the creation of opportunities for the many instead of the few. This movement for the reclamation of popular rights owes not a little to the keen advocacy of Mill.

He sat in the House of Commons from 1865 to 1868, and his sensitiveness to duty made him rivet himself to his place during every hour of the session. While his presence there was deemed an honor, he never felt at home in that unique and powerful assembly. By nature and training he was not a Parliamentarian, and Disraeli is reported to have called him "a

[1] *Autobiography*, p. 269.

political-finishing governess," a phrase which may have referred to the didactic tone of Mill's speeches. On the other hand, it was Gladstone who gave him the widely quoted title, "the Saint of Rationalism," adding, "He did us all good." Bright voted against him on one occasion; and when reproached for doing so, he gruffly replied that "the worst of great thinkers is that they generally think wrong." This sally was not serious, for Mill and Bright were associated on many important and far-reaching issues. Mill undoubtedly knew more of the empire of India than any other member of the House of his day, and he narrowly missed a seat on the first Imperial Council. He retired from Parliament with a sense of relief, because he felt that his true mission was to affect the course of events, not by an official career — his gifts were unsuited to the rough-and-tumble of debate — but by directing the trend of general thought and current opinion. For this he had peculiar qualifications; and to have purified the social and political controversies of the time from passion and prejudice, developing moderation and balance is a service that cannot be too highly praised. The man who brings about a new and beneficial result deserves a high place among his fellows, and scarcely lower would we account the man who, like Mill, regenerates our methods of thinking. Thus, although as a member of Parliament he

achieved small distinction, his whole conduct in public was, according to Mr. Frederic Harrison, "that of a courageous, conscientious, and noble-minded citizen, who gave his countrymen a rare example of how to play the most perilous of all parts — 'the rôle of a philosopher as ruler.'" Whether we agree or not with these claims, his bearing was always a combination of fidelity, justice, and courage.

Though brought up in absolute indifference to religion, Mill had a very religious nature; it was not until after his death, however, that the world became acquainted with the views he actually held. His father had been early led to reject, not only the belief in any revelation, but also the foundations of natural religion. Butler's *Analogy* restrained him for a while, but eventually he considered the Bishop's arguments as conclusive for nobody except the opponent for whom it was intended. Finding no halting-place in Deism, he finally took refuge in what was known later as Agnosticism. The activity of evil in the world promoted his negative attitude. The younger Mill never threw off religious belief, because he never had it. He looked upon all faiths, ancient and modern, as matters which did not concern him.[1] But the parental advice that he should not speak freely of this state of mind caused him to turn within himself; and when his *Three Essays on*

[1] See *Autobiography*, p. 43.

Religion appeared, they made quite a commotion among his followers. Leslie Stephen put the book down and paced his study in angry surprise. Mrs. Stephen offered the consoling remark, "I always told you John Mill was orthodox." A controversy arose as to the real nature of Mill's religious opinions. The first essay deals with the various interpretations that can be given to the term "Nature," and the aim is to show that Nature is not a true and complete guide in religion and morals. The following passages are good examples of the tone of the essay:

"Nature impales men, breaks them as if on the wheel, casts them to be devoured by wild beasts, burns them to death, crushes them with stones like the first Christain martyr, starves them with hunger, freezes them with cold, poisons them by the quick or slow venom of her exhalations, and has hundreds of other hideous deaths in reserve, such as the ingenious cruelty of a Nabis or a Domitian never surpassed. All this Nature does with the most supercilious disregard, both of mercy and of justice, emptying her shafts upon the best and the noblest indifferently with the meanest and worst.[1]

"[She is] replete with everything which when committed by human beings is most worthy of abhorrence; any one who endeavored in his actions to imitate the natural course of things

[1] *Three Essays on Religion* (third edition), p. 29.

would be universally seen and acknowledged to be the wickedest of men."[1]

This dread catalogue of deeds, which overmatch anarchy and the reign of terror, drew from Mill the dexterous piece of logic frequently quoted: "Either God could have prevented evil, and would not; or He would have prevented evil, and could not. If I accept the first, I conclude He is not all-good. If I accept the second, then He is not all-powerful." The possibilities of God, however, cannot be compressed into a dilemma. Mill's reasoning about the goodness and power of God and his insistence on choosing an alternative are fallacious. It is easy to formulate a proposition that appears conclusive; but a syllogism may be formally correct, and still be actually wrong. Why cannot God be all-powerful, and yet allow evil a place in the divine scheme? That is a supposition which Mill did not even admit here, though he allowed it in a letter written to a friend in 1860, to whom he says, "It would be a great moral improvement to most persons, be they Christian, Deists, or atheists, if they firmly believed the world to be under the government of a Being who, willing only good, leaves evil in the world solely in order to stimulate human faculties by an unremitting struggle against every form of it."

As we have seen, he repudiates conformity to

[1] *Three Essays on Religion* (third edition), p. 65.

nature; it is senseless and diabolical; and, in point of fact, he asserts that all the good accomplished in the world is the result of man's constant effort to control nature's blind and brutal havoc. Darwin's views of nature were not at this time fully before the world; Huxley had not yet developed his theories as outlined in the Romanes Lecture: so that to Mill we must give the credit of propounding opinions which were the result of individual experiences and observations; and although, to use Morley's terms, they were merely a surface and horizontal view, it is fair to assume they had a deep effect on the thought of the period. Tennyson was nearer the truth in his famous stanza on the man:

> "Who trusted God was love indeed,
> And love creation's final law —
> Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
> With ravin, shrieked against his creed."

Even this is submission rather than satisfaction, but Mill could not submit. "It was the conflict of nature's way with man's sense of justice that compelled him to judge her so terribly; it was not its contradiction to a heart of infinite pity in the God who had made man." [1]

The second essay dealt with the *Utility of Religion*. The questions asked are: Is religion directly serviceable to the social good? Is it useful for ennobling individual human nature?

[1] Fairbairn's *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion*, p. 96.

He answers both questions in the affirmative, though he maintains religion can have these two forms of utility without being necessarily supernatural; and he concludes the essay with an avowed preference for the religion of humanity, or, to use his own phrase, the religion of social duty. The third essay is on *Theism*. It is this part of the book which kindled the fears of his friends. Morley felt that the Mill he knew was slipping through his hands, and Courtney declared that the twilight land of Mill's semi-faith was not exactly known to his followers. The first leading idea is that God is the cause of the world, and though not always omnipotent, yet always benevolent. This compares very oddly with a nature full of cruelties. The second important idea is immortality, in which he has a faint belief. He urges that the soul may be immortal because the body is not the cause, but only the concomitant of mental life. The third idea centers upon Christ as a divinely appointed teacher. "Select," he says, "all the sayings of Christ which have high value, and reject the rest, and you are left with a character inexplicable on natural and historical grounds." We turn to his *Logic*, and find that the science of social development cannot dispense with the law of continuity. Historical sociology cannot admit that in the world's development a character could arise which had no relation to the past and no roots in existing

social conditions. Yet, despite the *Logic*, the essay on *Theism* declares that Christ was charged with "a special, express, and unique commission from God to lead mankind to truth and virtue."[1] Indeed, the whole paragraph is so refreshing we venture to quote it:

"Whatever else may be taken away from us by rational criticism, Christ is still left: a unique figure, not more unlike all his precursors than all his followers, even those who had the direct benefit of his personal teaching. It is of no use to say that Christ, as exhibited in the Gospels, is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable has been superadded by the tradition of his followers. The tradition of followers suffices to insert any number of marvels, . . . but who among his disciples, or among their proselytes, was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels? But about the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality, combined with profundity of insight, which . . . must place the Prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of all the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this preëminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer, and martyr to that mission,

[1] *Essays on Religion*, p. 255.

who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor, even now, would it be easy even for an unbeliever to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life. When to this we add that, to the conception of the rational skeptic, it remains a possibility that Christ actually was what he supposed himself to be — not God, for he never made the smallest pretension to that character, and would probably have thought such a pretension as blasphemous, as it seemed to the men who condemned him — but a man charged with a special, express, and unique commission from God to lead mankind to truth and virtue; we may well conclude that the influences of religion on the character, which will remain after rational criticism has done its utmost against the evidences of religion, are well worth preserving, and that what they lack in direct strength, as compared with those of a firmer belief, is more than compensated by the greater truth and rectitude of the morality they sanction." [1]

In a letter to Carlyle he says: "I have recently read the New Testament. . . . It has made no new impression, only strengthened the best of the old. I have for years had the very same

[1] *Essays on Religion*, pp. 253 ff.

idea of Christ, and the same unbounded reverence for him as now; it was because of this reverence that I sought a more perfect acquaintance with the records of his life, that indeed gave new life to the reverence, which in any case was becoming or was closely allied with all that was becoming a living principle in my character." [1] Confessions and sentiments of this kind well up from the deeps of his nature; and had not his youthful soul been overlaid with his father's crass materialism, we might reasonably believe he would have been, not only the saint of rationalism, but a saint of social Christianity. To have begun life thoroughly diverted from Christian truth, and to rise steadily to such a noble appreciation of Christ, stands greatly to the credit of Mill.

During the latter part of his life he was the man to whom many leaders looked for guidance, and his opinions, if not fully accepted, were always worthy of serious consideration. But more than that, he was a living example of disinterestedness, and zeal for mankind. His favorite motto was, "The night cometh when no man can work." Every movement for the improvement of the conditions of the people had his whole-hearted approval, and he endeavored to aid all who identified themselves with beneficent schemes. Bain records that he was a strong supporter of Chadwick's Poor Law and

[1] *Letters of John Stuart Mill*, p. 93.

Sanitary Legislation. One of the most striking examples of his fearlessness was his firm opposition to public opinion on the vexed questions of Irish land legislation. When the penny postage was initiated, he was overjoyed. In other directions, too, his services were many and valuable; for instance, it was he who discovered Tennyson to his generation, and he also revealed the intrinsic worth of Carlyle's *French Revolution*, securing for it a speedy recognition.

Lastly, Mill, as an apostle of reason, is a voice not without its warnings. For once reason is jettisoned; our later-day democracy has no principle of guidance, and flounders, as it is doing at this hour, among judgments that are confused, dogmatic, and narrowly emotional. If only the name of a temporary leader is shouted in a public meeting, it is at once the signal for a round of clumsy abuse or meaningless applause. The real motive forces are too frequently wayward impulses; and quite independently of the question as to whether reality is behind them or not, they take the place of orderly inquiry and legitimate progress. Unless we can return to Mill's methods, and believe that facts cannot go ahead of ideas, reformers will hinder rather than help the causes they seek to serve.

"No calculus, it has been well said, can integrate the innumerable little pulses of knowledge and of thought that he has made to vibrate

in the minds of his generation. In logic, in ethics, in politics, we have nourished ourselves at his springs. Let us make the full acknowledgment of our debt, and also add that, while all that is worst in him belongs to the eighteenth century, all that is best is akin to the highest, best spirit of the nineteenth."[1] His influence on his generation was enormous and if advocates of democracy, political economists, sociologists, and moralists of today, see farther than their fathers, it is because they stand on the shoulders of John Stuart Mill.

[1] W. L. Courtney's *J. S. Mill*, p. 174.

FOURTH LECTURE

JAMES MARTINEAU

"We have become free from the fetters of spiritual narrowness; we have, because of our progressive culture, become capable of returning to the Source and apprehending Christianity in its purity. We have regained the courage to stand with firm feet on God's own earth and to feel within, our own human nature, God-endowed. Let spiritual culture continue ever to advance, let the natural sciences grow ever broader and deeper, and the human spirit enlarge itself as it will — yet, beyond the majesty and moral culture which shines and lightens in the Gospels, it will not advance."

GOETHE.

JAMES MARTINEAU

PART I

I

THE Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 marked the culmination of the fanatical policy of Louis XIV, and inflicted a loss upon France from which she never recovered. The nation's history was saddened; its strength was depleted; and a quarter of a million of its choicest subjects were driven into adjacent provinces and beyond the high seas. Among the Huguenots who escaped, during the harryings and dragonnades, were Gaston Martineau and William Pierre, who met as fellow refugees on the ship that carried them to England. The tyrannical and brutal assaults upon their most cherished convictions had already bound together this afflicted people, and the friendship then begun ripened into a family union. In 1693 Pierre's daughter was married to Gaston Martineau at the French church in Spitalfields, London.

Two years later the newly wedded couple left the metropolis, and made their home in the ancient city of Norwich, the capital of East Anglia, and a well-known center of Puritanism.

Here they entered into more or less intimate relationship with such leaders as Henry Finch, John Meadows, and Benjamin Fairfax, — men who had felt the repressive measures of Archbishop Laud and the Stuarts, and who extended a cordial and sympathetic welcome to their Huguenot brethren. The sad yet heroical story of the perils of their ancestors was unceasingly fascinating to the later Martineaus, and it kindled in them a hatred of any sort of legalized injustice, and a fervent passion for religious liberty. For several generations they seem to have followed the vocation of Gaston Martineau as practising surgeons and physicians. But Thomas, the father of Dr. Martineau, was a wool merchant, who, after an honorable and self-sacrificing career, died in 1826, leaving to his children a stainless record of moral intrepidity and integrity. His wife, whose maiden name was Elizabeth Rankin, hailed from northern England. She was a woman of devout and practical temper and a calmly fervent zeal, whose domestic duties absorbed her time and toil and care. She guarded the temporal and, more especially, the spiritual interests of her household with unswerving devotion. Her innate refinement and sweetness were never surrendered to the demands of her hard and patient tasks. She had an inborn taste for music, literature, and the arts, which her children imbibed from her. In

this home of even, strong desires, quiet purity, and simple steadfastness, James Martineau was born on the 21st of April, 1805. The building, a plain three-storied brick structure, stands to-day on Magdalene Street, and is known as the "Martineau House." Under its archway the visitor passes to the garden, which retains some traces of its former beauty. In the apartment immediately above the archway Harriet Martineau, the famous sister of the eight children, wrote her earlier works. The city spreads from north to south, encompassing its venerable fabrics, its thirty-six churches, and a mighty mound raised over the bones of the heathen king who is buried deep beneath, his sword by his side, and his treasures about him. The gray castle rises three hundred feet above the level of the flatlands, and among the immemorial trees stands the Norman master's work, the great cathedral, with its stately and cloud-encircled spire, which George Borrow never ceased to praise.

The meeting-house where the Martineaus worshipped was known as the Octagon Chapel. John Wesley described it in his *Journal* as "perhaps the most elegant in all Europe, the inside is furnished in the highest taste and is as clean as any nobleman's *salon*. How can it be thought that the coarse old gospel should find admission there?" It harbored a different presentation of the evangel from that which

Wesley's gallant and hardy field-preachers would have made, yet one which gave to the earnest lad who heard it a consciousness of the Everlasting God as his divine Father and a profound reverence for sacred realities. The sermons of Thomas Madge, the first pastor he recalled, kindled in him an ambition to become a messenger of truth and peace to men.

In the well-ordered and frugal household of the Martineaus the older children taught the younger, and James was always the peculiar charge of Harriet, who felt herself responsible for what he said and did. His eldest brother, Thomas, a rising surgeon of much promise, died while comparatively young. When James was eight years old, he entered Norwich Grammar School, where he remained from 1815 to 1817. Later he was sent to Bristol to the academy of the well-known Dr. Lant Carpenter, whose wise and timely instructions stimulated his growing intellect and moral enthusiasm. Upon leaving Bristol he proceeded to Derby, with the intention of becoming an engineer. Fortunately for Christendom that purpose was thwarted; but the visit was an important event in his career, for in the home of the Rev. Edward Higginson he met his future wife, and while here he definitely decided on the course his life should take. The death of Henry Turner of Nottingham, a junior minister of spiritual renown, so moved

him that "it worked his conversion and sent him into the ministry."

When he looked around for a theological school in which to begin his preparatory training, he found none which did not demand creedal tests and subscriptions, save the Free College then located at York, later at Manchester, and finally at London. To York he went, and was enrolled there as a student in 1822. The curriculum was an unusually advantageous one for the times, and Martineau availed himself to the fullest extent of its opportunities. At the conclusion of his course he faced the future, enriched in mind by his arduous studies, and mellowed in character by the sorrows he had experienced in the loss of his father and brother. A single quotation from the grave and prescient youth of twenty-two shows how mature he was. "Nothing," said he, "is without God. The fields of earth, the boundless recesses of heaven, are the scenes of His ceaseless activity. He is felt in every breeze that blows; He is seen in every form of beauty and sublimity." Such was the creed he had formulated, derived in part from this creedless institution, and it proved to be a sufficient foundation upon which the graduate could erect one of the noblest religious philosophies of any age.

On leaving college he took the place of his former master, Dr. Carpenter, and a little later was called from Bristol to the assistant pas-

torate of Eustace Street Congregation, Dublin. Here comparative freedom from parochial details enabled him to perfect his pulpit style right early. His views on sermonic development were always high and serious, and he approached his people only after the most thorough and exhaustive preparation of the themes he selected for their meditation. The results of this unhampered study were seen in his creation of a new order of homiletical literature, of which *Hours of Thought* and *Endeavors after the Christian Life* are the best examples, and destined, in the opinion of not a few competent critics, to outlive the rest of his works. His ordination followed his call, and it is worthy of remark that the future prophet of liberal Christianity received it from the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, which then participated in the "heresies" of the day. After the office of the ministry had been fully assumed, he returned to England to marry Miss Higginson, who proved to be in all respects "a complete helpmeet worthy of the great love he bore her." They made their first home in Dublin, and there began a happy period of mutual sympathy and congenial work. In addition to his clerical duties, which were not excessive, he taught Hebrew and the higher mathematics to undergraduates of the University.

When it fell to his lot to undertake the senior pastorate of the Eustace Street Church, he

found connected with its financial resources a Government grant of money, which dated from the time of the Stuarts. This he at once refused to accept, and wrote a powerful defense of his action containing four reasons against State pay or patronage. The dispute was severe, and he resigned his charge rather than lower his standard. At the moment he had no prospect of another appointment; but the sterling manliness and consistency of his attitude drew many hearts toward the courageous young preacher, and he soon received and accepted an invitation to the Paradise Street Chapel, Liverpool, where he spent twenty-four years from 1832 to 1857 — years filled with growing usefulness and gradually extending fame. His colleagues in the Unitarian churches of the town were John Hamilton Thom and Henry Giles, men of learning and eloquence, who joined him in repelling a bitter attack upon their interpretation of Christianity, which had been engendered by a group of Anglican clergymen. The debate excited national interest, and was known as "The Liverpool Controversy." Its chief outcome was the revelation of Martineau's hitherto unsuspected powers and resources. Orthodox and heretical alike were forced to recognize in him the foremost divine of the Unitarian fellowship. Apart from this gratifying result, the quarrel was as acrimonious as it was useless. But it secured him

friends and supporters, who gladly provided the necessary funds for further cultivation of his remarkable gifts. In 1848 they sent him to Berlin University, where he spent one winter, during which he made a careful survey of German thought and literature. Greek philosophy was also studied from a fresh standpoint, and the general effect of this contact was such that he always referred to it as the time of "a new intellectual birth." He wrote to Francis W. Newman, the Cardinal's brother, "I shall ever be thankful for this year of absence; it has at last assured me that I am not too old to learn." The Liverpool ministry and the earlier years in London reveal marked traces of his visit to Germany. It consolidated Martineau's position among both admirers and opponents of his theological tendencies. Moncure D. Conway states that the English clergy awoke to the fact that here was a Unitarian minister who left them far behind "in philosophical culture, in classical lore, in biblical criticism," and in an ordered and weighty style of speech, which was a fitting instrumentality for these superior attainments. Crowning all other endowments, even the prejudiced discovered in Martineau a spiritual clarity and insight and an attractive symmetry of character, which were the more effective because of the utter absence of arrogance or the taint of cant.

In 1853 he was appointed a lecturer in his

Alma Mater, and five years later, when the college was removed to London, he decided to resign his charge at Liverpool, in order that he might continue his professorship in the refounded institution. He united this office with the pastorate of the Little Portland Street Chapel. "*Gain* does not tempt me," he said to his sorrowing flock when he bade them farewell, "for I go to a poorer life; or *Ambition*, for I retire to a less conspicuous; or *Ease*, for I commit myself to unsparing labor." [1] His advent in the metropolis fulfilled the aims he had steadily kept before him since his vacation in Germany. He became the foremost preacher of his order, a living voice uttering, for those whom he strove to aid, the truths by which men and nations live. During his residence abroad a renewed conviction of man's moral obligations, and a fresh insight into the fundamental verities underlying visible things, had quickened his perceptions and given him a vision of the future he had not previously enjoyed. This contact with the deeper and more vital thought of the Continentals enabled him to pierce through mere verbiage, and the result was that his utterances glowed with the spirit of an illuminating philosophy. He was entirely freed from the Utilitarian and Necessitarian views then prevalent in Britain; he parted company forever with the Benthamites, and their latest

[1] *Life and Letters of James Martineau*, Vol. I, p. 326.

advocate, John Stuart Mill. He identified himself with a refined and spiritually susceptible metaphysic, of which he became a thoroughly competent exponent. His friendships with John James Taylor and Francis W. Newman were important factors at this time. The former, his predecessor whom he succeeded as principal of the college in 1869, was a generous and urbane scholar whose culture and geniality charmed professors and students alike; the latter was a misunderstood man, whose story is pathetic. Newman had lost the love of many of his associates; he was hampered by marked peculiarities, but ever eager in his search for truth, and he suffered acutely for the sake of his opinions.

The foolish and wayward people whose frivolity and pleasure-seeking betray their sordidness, and the degraded whose lives are openly vile, were never the direct objects of Martineau's mission as he conceived it. He desired above all else to enlighten and cheer those who take life at the best; those who, though prone to God and goodness, beauty and truth, are robbed of their faith and hope by doubt and uncertainty. For such perplexed and encumbered souls he had an unfailing affinity, and his aptitude for elucidation found free play in his service to them. There was a certain fascination about the stately aloofness of Martineau's spirit which drew the few, though it did not attract the multitude. This, together with a

characteristic wistful tenderness, justified Lady Tennyson's description of him as having "a subtle and wonderful mind; he is mournful and tender-looking, 'a noble gentleman.'"[1] In this congregation were to be found such celebrities as Sir Charles Lyell, Charles Dickens, Miss Frances Power Cobbe, and other scientific and literary magnates. Mr. A. W. Jackson described his presence in the London pulpit as "a tall, spare figure robed in the scholar's gown, and wearing the dignities of his office as a natural grace; a thin face, suggestive of the cloister, and traced with deep lines of thought; a voice not loud, but musical and reaching; an enunciation leisurely but not slow, and perfectly distinct. . . . And now the sermon; from the beginning it is plain that it is to serious thought, yes, and hard thinking, that you are invited. . . . Dr. Martineau as a preacher never entertains; he has serious business with you, and to the consideration of that he holds you with little thought whether he entertain or not. You have been living in some castle of worldliness or pride; — there is a hopeless débris around you, and you a shivering and unsheltered soul in the bleak desert of the world. You are suffocated with the dust of life; you are borne away to some Alpine summit where the air is free and a glory thrills you. You came hither, as you felt, deserted

[1] *Life and Letters of James Martineau*, Vol. II, p. 2.

and alone; you go home with — God."[1] "Sometimes," adds Miss Cobbe, "these ascents were steep and difficult." No doubt they were, even for climbers of her caliber; but the preacher was no ordinary guide to these bolder spiritual eminences. The upward movements he directed were strong and sure; they justified the remark of Mr. Gladstone that "Dr. Martineau was the greatest living thinker of his calling." He laid emphasis, not only on the virgin scholarship and profound thought which characterized his spoken words, but also on all the requirements of a city parish, and especially on the Christian nurture of childhood and youth. As might be expected, he spent laborious days in his study; but he was no mere recluse, unversed in worldly wisdom, for his knowledge of practical affairs was both extensive and accurate. Nothing escaped him. He held that "a soul occupied with great ideas best performs small duties." And the reward of his efforts was not in the confidence of the cultured earned alone, but in the respect and even veneration of the young people of his charge and of the students of the college.

Harvard first, then Leyden, Edinburgh, Oxford, and Dublin gave him their highest degrees. The *Spectator* pointed out that while learned Europe heaped its honors upon him, Oxford did not seem to discover him till he

[1] *James Martineau: A Study and Biography*, pp. 143–144.

was over eighty, and Cambridge appears never to have heard of him. The recognition accorded, whether early or late, was based on a growing list of philosophical and theological treatises which could not be ignored, although in some points they were diametrically opposed to orthodox dogmas. Ambassador Bryce, who presented him at Oxford in 1885, for the reception of the degree of Doctor of Civil Law, testified to his long life, "full of dignity, sweetness, and distinguished literary activity." [1] The encomium was worthy of both men, and it selected from the embarrassing wealth of Martineau's life and services those features which will remain as the permanent possessions of Englishmen and Americans in days to come. Gladstone, Ruskin, Tennyson, Huxley, Tyndall, Cardinal Manning, Father Dalgairns, Henry Sidgwick, and Dr. Ward and others formed with Martineau "The Metaphysical Society." They met to discuss subjects of the highest import, and when the society was dissolved the minute-book was presented to Dr. Martineau as a token of gratitude for his services to the fraternity. Located in different camps on many questions, these men, to quote Huxley, "came to love each other like brothers. We all expended so much charity that had it been money we should have been bankrupt."

In 1862 Martineau issued a critique on

[1] *Life and Letters of James Martineau*, Vol. II, pp. 146–7.

Spencer's *First Principles*, in 1863 another on Renan's *Life of Jesus*, and in 1874 appeared a new edition of *Hymns of Praise and Prayer*. His indebtedness to the poetry and devotional literature of the Church was dwelt upon in a letter he addressed to the Rev. S. D. I. MacDonald in 1859, and also in the preface to the book. "I am constrained to say that neither my intellectual preference nor my moral admiration goes heartily with the Unitarian heroes, sects, or productions of any age. Ebionites, Arians, Socinians, all seem to me to contrast unfavorably with their opponents, and to exhibit a type of thought and character far less worthy, on the whole, of the true genius of Christianity. . . . In devotional literature and religious thought I find nothing of ours that does not pale before Augustine, Tauler, and Pascal. And in the poetry of the Church it is the Latin or the German hymns, or the lines of Charles Wesley or of Keble, that fasten on my memory and heart, and make all else seem poor and cold. . . . To be torn away from the great company I have named, and transferred to the ranks which command a far fainter allegiance, is an unnatural and for me an inadmissible fate. . . . For myself both conviction and feeling keep me close to the poetry and piety of Christendom. It is my native air, and in no other can I breathe; and wherever it passes, it so mellows the soil and feeds the

roots of character, and nurtures such grace and balance of affection, that for any climate similarly rich in elements of perfect life I look in vain elsewhere." In 1876 the first series of *Hours of Thought* was published, followed by the second series in 1879; in 1882 came the volume on *Spinoza*. For some time the material ultimately embodied in *Types of Ethical Theory* had been taking shape in his mind, and the publication of this splendid contribution to ethics was contemporary with his retirement from his more public life. But his activities as a writer were never more manifest than after this occurrence. *The Study of Religion* appeared in 1888, and *The Seat of Authority in Religion* was given to the world in 1890, when the author was eighty-five years old. Even this advanced age did not retard his marvelously preserved powers. Four volumes of *Essays, Reviews, and Addresses* were subsequently sent forth, and later still a collection of *Home Prayers*, which he described as the last book he would offer to the reading public.

He resigned his principalship of the College in 1885, and the fifteen years left to him were as notable for his physical alertness and activity as for the literary output we have indicated. He had always been a vigorous walker; and when the Rev. O. B. Frothingham called upon him, Martineau, who was then seventy-five, proposed a nine-mile tramp across

country, with a mountain climb thrown in. When he was eighty-eight, his lithe form was frequently seen as he threaded his way among the vehicles of the crowded London streets, and not until he was ninety could he be persuaded to refrain from jumping off omnibuses in motion. He was naturally austere in his regard for life and duty, with more care for conscience than for the surface raptures of emotion; but the light within and the love and regard around him made him serenely bright and cheerful, and he said, "I think nothing more delightful than the first step into my ninetieth year." On his eighty-third birthday he received a congratulatory address, signed by six hundred and forty-nine of the most renowned men then living, including, besides some we have already named, Robert Browning, Max Müller, Jowett of Balliol, Sir John Lubbock,[1] W. H. Lecky, James Russell Lowell, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Phillips Brooks, and Ernest Renan. The inscription sums up the story: "We admire the simple record of a long life passed in the strenuous fulfilment of duty, in preaching, in teaching the young of both sexes, in writing books of permanent value; a life which has never been distracted by controversy, and in which personal interests and ambitions have never been allowed a place." That presence of God, which had been the mainstay of his

[1] Now Lord Avebury.

honored way, and the theme of all his writings and preaching, was entered by him in its complete fulness on January 11, 1900, at the ripe age of ninety-five.

II

The description of Dr. Martineau as an intellectual aristocrat, whose works are not available for the ordinary individual, is misleading. Even those which require some previous knowledge of the subject dealt with are so suggestive that few can fail to receive lasting benefit from their perusal. His sermons are accessible to all; no one indeed can read them without having the love of whatever is noble confirmed and the spiritual sensibilities quickened. Yet their beauty, fidelity, and dignity would not have been so conspicuous or so impressive without his profound and reverent study of ethics and philosophy. He never catered to the sluggish mind; he believed, and he endeavored to persuade others to believe, that "in the soul of religion the apprehension of truth and the enthusiasm of devotion inseparably blend." The sources of sustenance underlying Martineau's exquisite discourses were his clear and sustained thinking on the mysteries and compensations of life, and his suffusion of its rational elements with the glow of a chaste imagination and the warmth of a living heart. These qualities found their expression in a style

which was at once their servant and their friend; a style which gives inspiration to the spirit and leaves music in the memory. My former teacher, the Rev. Dr. W. T. Davison, in an able discussion of Martineau, speaks of this style as entirely his own. "If he was not born with it and did not lisp it in his cradle, he seems to have spoken and written in it from early youth when his mind was formed, to have employed it whenever he spoke, to have written his most friendly letters in it, and to have preserved it unaltered, unwavering in its stateliness, undimmed in its brilliance, to the very end. If Gibbon marches and Macaulay trots, Martineau now exhibits the army in the splendors of parade and now in the sweep of a cavalry charge. He combines strength and grace; his thought is lofty, his touch discriminating, his argument close and keen, his definition accurate, his words express with delicate suppleness all the movements of a subtle and rapid and powerful mind."[1] Many sentences may be quoted which linger with us, but a few must suffice. "No grief deserves such pity as the hopeless privations of a scornful heart." "God has so arranged the chronometry of our spirits that there shall be thousands of silent moments between the striking hours." "Man, the self-conscious animal, is the saddest spectacle in creation; man, the self-conscious Chris-

[1] See *London Quarterly Review*, April, 1903.

tian, one of the noblest." "Reflecting vitality is hypochondria and disease; reflecting spirituality is clearness and strength." "To give to God something that we have is heathen; to offer Him what we do is Jewish; to surrender to Him what we are is Christian."

Martineau's ethical teaching was based on the innate goodness of human nature, whose spiritual experiences antedate any formal statement of religious truth. This position is in direct opposition to the dogma of original sin. To him a child was God's offspring, and lives and moves and has its being in the Divine before it arrives at a conscious apprehension of its inheritance. It has a native sense of right and wrong; it seldom requires to be led; we have but to offer the highest and the best to the young, and they will act upon it, and be filled with a real love for its beauty and praise. To demand of them a consciousness of sin and ruin was to him a policy both erroneous and mischievous. Theories of rewards and punishments, pleasure and profit were injurious rather than helpful to virtuous action and nobility of life. The instructor should attach the child's inborn sense of righteousness to legitimate and clear objects of faith. The unadulterated conscience of youth will answer of itself to the reality and holiness which are in the Creator and His creation. The beliefs of adults — beliefs which result from older and less fortu-

nate experiences — are extraneous to the child's mind, and should not be forced upon it. They do not touch the religious problems of the immature, and they inevitably mislead them. The suppressive and negative treatment of human nature, whether in infants or adults, was replaced in Martineau's system by an expansive and positive treatment, which allowed for the free play of inherent virtues. His advocacy of these tenets had a weighty influence in England and America. Their suitability as a means of development is now more fully recognized, and they have affected the reconstructive period of Bible School methods, as well as the remodeling of theology and hymnology. Horace Bushnell was another pioneer, who, by his teachings on Christian nurture for the young, did almost more than Martineau to give practical effect to what many regarded as a pestilential error. The conception of the youthful soul as a pure and undefiled arbiter of the proper scope and objects of its own faith, able with the dawn of consciousness intuitively to recognize and obey them, came as a distinct shock to the Evangelicals. They deeply distrusted salvation by education, and preferred regeneration as an unmistakable revolution in the sinful and fallen spiritual nature. They contended that such teaching as Martineau's ignored the sinister realities of evil, and could not account for the ominous facts of human

life. They refused to admit the superiority of the child nature to the doctrines of Holy Scripture, or its right to judge them by what Martineau defines as the "voice of the living God within the child." He affirmed that the greatest of all books for the moral and spiritual training of youth was the Bible, and that the response of the voice within was evoked by the application of the truth the Bible contained. But it was not dependent on it; indeed, the Bible was nothing more nor less than the externalized conscience of the Hebrew race, and, while he venerated it, he held it subordinate to that moral sense of which it was the expression. The seat of authority in religion and ethics was native and indestructible, whether in children or their elders; it was of direct divine origin, and must be carefully distinguished from the "ecclesiastical conscience" which had been molded by tradition, theology, and the Scriptures.

All this is introductory to the intuitional theory of ethics upon which Martineau sustained his system, and from the foregoing comments it is easy to see what direction that system would take. He was emphatic in his declaration that man's moral judgment is part of his original nature, requiring no extensive experience or sudden conversion for its rightful exercise. The approval of temperance, truthfulness, and courage, and the condemnation

of the reverse qualities, are instinctive and immediate. The ability to arrive at these judgments is an inherent faculty, not to be analyzed, universal in extent, and the gift of God. In those cases where there is a conflict between the higher and lower principles of life, conscience acts as the determinative factor. The conflict may wage in the soul of the most abject heathen, or the most enlightened saint. The important thing is not the plane on which the struggle is waged, but how it is waged just where men are. This inner vision of moral discernment is diametrically opposed to the Utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill, and its statement reveals the wide breach between Martineau and his earlier masters. Their ethics were always prudential; they carefully noted the *results* of any action, and assigned the ethical value of the action accordingly. It was right or wrong as it tended to promote pleasure or pain. When individual and general happiness was the experimental outcome, the deed was worthy; when otherwise, it was unworthy. Martineau carries us into another and a superior region. He begins by showing that "the key to the ancient philosophy is found in a distinction which our language does not enable us accurately to express . . . absolute existence and relative phenomena." [1] The adjustment of the respective rights of these sole claimants of

[1] *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, p. 1.

the whole sphere of things was the problem and the task of the Hellenic schools. But under all their varieties lay the twofold distribution of that which *ever is* and that which *transiently appears*. These were assumed as exhaustive and ultimate. They were also omnipresent, and there was no dividing line between the eternal entities and the successive phenomena. Both were blended in every nature, whether human or external. The same divine element which constituted the beauty, truth, and goodness of the Cosmos, spread into the human mind, and established there the conscious recognition of beauty, truth, and goodness. Man was but a part and member of the universe, sharing its mixed character, and standing in no antithetical position thereto.[1]

The key to the modern philosophy is found in a different distinction, — that between *the subjective* and *the objective*, between the mind — the constituted seat and principle of thought — and the scene or data assigned it to think. And the answers to the endless questions of *the Ego*, or *the Non-Ego*, are idealistic or realistic, "in proportion as 'they' give ascendency to the former, or to the latter, as the source of our cognitions." This idealism seeks to interpret the world through man, to find mind, idea, spirit in all, through all, over all. But Martineau never becomes so intellectual in interest,

[1] *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, p. 2.

or so logical in method, that he fails in doing full justice to the moral or religious consciousness. Though he crosses over into the psychological theory, he is aware that this of itself does not fulfil ethical conditions. Fichte's idealism reduced the objective standard of moral obligation to a mere modification of self, and thus dissipated the essence of imperative authority, "which ever implies a law above and beyond the nature summoned to obey it." Hegel regarded the philosophical as a higher point of view than the religious. The realities of faith and reason were translated by the thoroughgoing Hegelians into abstractions of thought, and this process of reduction exercised a detrimental rather than a salutary influence. To thus disown all reality outside the mind, and resolve everything into a subjective dream, was repulsive to Martineau. For in perception and in conscience there is a "*self*" and an "*other than self*." "In perception it is *self and nature*, in morals it is *self and God*, which stand face to face in the subjective and objective antithesis." No monistic system could interpret, from any starting-point, any one or all of these without a destructive handling of "the facts on which our nature and life are built." Without higher objective conditions nothing is binding on us. "Conscience does not frame the law, it simply reveals the law, that holds us." Surely that which it dis-

closes is the regal authority, having, as Bishop Butler argued, a further authority which will presently support and enforce its demands.

Leslie Stephen speaks slightingly of Martineau's central doctrine of an autonomous and independent conscience — a faculty which exists as a primitive and elementary instinct incapable of further analysis and implanted by God. Under the pressure of the evolutionary theory, he regards the speculation as erroneous and liable to clash with the results of scientific inquiry. Martineau asserts that such results have their own range of jurisdiction which must not be allowed to interfere with the moral order. These boundaries cannot be slurred without confusion, nor a provincial law enforced over an entire spiritual empire. Sensational, intellectual, and æsthetical differences may be really *moral* differences, disguised and robbed of their standing by the garnish and pretense. He names "the scheme of Epicurus and Bentham, which elicits the moral nature from the sentient; that of Cudworth, Clarke, and Price, which makes it a dependency on the rational; that of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, which identifies it with the æsthetic." [1]

He then proceeds to discuss the moral sentiment in the light of its own experience, and shows how this visit to our consciousness of right and wrong in its own home has the merit

[1] *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, p. 17.

of "compelling us to look it full in the face, and take distinct notes of the story it tells of itself." The fundamental fact of ethics is that men have an irresistible tendency to *approve* and *disapprove*. When our fellow creatures are in question, we speak of their morals; when, however, attention is focused upon ourselves, we are led to speak of our duty. In this continuous engagement, we judge persons and not things. We visit our indignation on the man who steals the watch, not on the hand that went into the pocket. The external world may be lifted into this personal element and become the center of various feelings; but in itself it is perfectly indifferent to conscience, and any application of ethical terms to its phenomena is manifestly inappropriate.

Again, the inner motive of an action is distinguished from its outward operation. Spencer supports Martineau's plea;[1] and Leslie Stephen goes so far to to declare that "the clear enunciation of this principle seems to be a characteristic of all great moral revelations. It may be briefly expressed in the phrase that "morality is internal." "Be this," not "Do this," is the true form of expression of the moral law; and the possibility of expressing any rule in this form may be regarded as deciding whether it can or cannot have a distinctly moral character.[2]

[1] *Data of Ethics*, Chap. V, Sec. 24, p. 64.
[2] *Science of Ethics*, Chap. IV, Sec. 16, p. 155.

It is not by outward appearance that we can judge moral action. We must know it on the inner side, and only thus do we know it at all. In the reduction of a deed to its elements, the three stages James Mill indicated are quoted by Martineau: there are (1) the sentiments from which it springs; (2) the muscular movements in which it visibly consists; (3) the consequences in which it issues. Sever the first, and the other two lose their moral quality; sever the other two, and the moral quality remains. It is obvious that good or evil cannot be attached to muscular movement or consequences, but only to the cause of both in the underlying sentiment. The student of Christianity does not need to be reminded of the great word of Jesus on this theme. Anger, malice and lust may lack opportunity, but he who would and could not is called to account with him who would and did. And in a higher than the ethical region the doctrine of divine forgiveness for sin is established within us, and our reconciliation with God is realized, by simple inward penitence, faith, and love. Heavenly relations between the All-holy Father and the guilty yet contrite spirit are consummated in the inmost recesses of the heart. The scale of *external* benefits accruing from any course of action is not a proper standard of estimate for such a course. The love and fidelity of the obscure, whose opportunities are

small, may be even more intense and devoted, and we are to "graduate our approval by the purity of the source, not by the magnitude of the result." Herein Christian ethics have shared the distinctive luster of the system of "inwardness" from which they spring. And on this issue they carry with them the verdict of our moral consciousness.

Dr. Martineau pushes the examination a step farther. He asks whom we first judge, ourselves or others? He believes the answer is of prime importance, and that it is one of the surest tests by which we detect a true theory of ethics. The majority of English moralists are remiss in this respect, since they concur in saying that judgment begins with others and the habit is then transferred to ourselves.[1] W. K. Clifford and Leslie Stephen held that "the conscience is the utterance of the public spirit of the race, ordering us to obey the primary conditions of its welfare." Spencer regarded the moral consciousness as wholly a social product due to the observed or experienced consequences of executed action.[2] Martineau remained true to his theory of the inner spring of action, which could not be apprehended by any external observation, and which must be known only from within. He claimed that we judge ourselves first and judge others by

[1] *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, p. 27.
[2] *Data of Ethics*, Chap. VII, Sec. 44, p. 120.

ourselves. Our actual knowledge of the motives of others is necessarily scanty. We condemn brutality in another because we could not be guilty of such violence without being faithless to our better self. We quickly gather by word, look, or gesture what good or bad passions are agitating our fellows. But unless we had first experienced these emotions ourselves they would be meaningless to us. And in proportion as the habitual feelings and tastes of those around us are foreign to our own, "do the manners which express them become unintelligible or displeasing." The man who is prone to suspect treachery or fraud in others "is little likely to be of a transparent nature himself." So criticism, like charity, begins at home, and the censorious temper is an artifice "by which we suborn a true light to give us a false vision." [1] We pay small heed to society when two motives are in conflict within us. We may have respect for the possible outcome of actions directed by the motives; but we know without the word of others which is the higher motive, and we know it immediately, and why it should govern us. He would guard this statement against the charge that it makes for isolated units. Though our moral estimates originate in self-reflection, the "social sanction" is indispensable to their development as a part of our moral nature. The visible

[1] *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, pp, 29, 30.

world employs, though it does not originate, our perceptive powers. In like manner our fellow men are instrumental in discovering us to ourselves, and the objective conscience embodied in society and its institutions has a restraining and an educative influence for the individual, which Martineau both appreciated and enforced.

In laying bare the process of decisions, he arrives at three factors which underlie all moral actions: the co-presence of motives, the conflict involved, and our freedom to choose between them. The maxim of Heraclitus that "strife is the father of all things," though mainly applied by him to the objective world, has a justifiable reference to the circumstances of our moral life. If there were no conflict of motives, the first to appear would have free course and project itself into action instantly. As it is, we have the power to determine which motive shall govern our conduct, and this freedom of choice is a fact concerning which extended discussion is futile. How could we approve or disapprove of any one's conduct if we did not believe that another course of action were possible?[1] There are many arguments against

[1] "How could I feel 'morally' toward other individuals if I knew they were machines and nothing more? — machines which some day I myself might be able to construct like a steam-engine? To a convinced theoretical materialist to whom his neighbour is a real mechanical system, morality is an absurdity." Professor Hans Driesch, *The Science and Philosophy of the Organism*, Vol. II, p. 358.

the freedom of the will; but experience declares for it, and the welfare of society demands it. The impulses that constantly solicit the acquiescence of the will disclose its prevalence, and the keen rivalry of their competition throws light on the scale of excellence in conduct. To make gratification in any way the criterion of this scale of excellence is virtually to hand over morals to the hierarchy of prudence rather than the hierarchy of right. Men know what they like, and they also know what they approve: to arrange everything in the former category is a hedonistic order; in the latter, a moral one. Though what they like they may also approve does not affect this reasoning. The self-conscious apprehension of compared springs of action, and men's responsibility to the gradations of their moral quality, is that knowledge of themselves for better or worse which is called conscience.[1] So whenever men succumb to temptation they identify themselves with the worst that is possible to them at the moment, and true repentance is always accompanied by the confession that there is no excuse for the wrong-doing. "Would it have dried the tears of Peter's denial to be told that he had not murdered but only disowned his Lord?" There may be other passions more seductive and base, and other deeds more vile; but these do not enter into the case. The true

[1] *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, p. 53.

standard of comparison is in men, and above men, but never beneath them. Lesser turpitude does not appear more favorable because contrasted with greater. They are judged by the principles to which they have been false; and that others act on more degenerate levels, or from lower motives, furnishes no apology for their delinquency. "We are sensible," says Martineau, "of a graduated scale among our natural principles, quite distinct from the order of their intensity and irrespective of the range of their external effects." It is identical and constant for all men, no accident of our particular personality, but one scale in the moral ascent whether we think of the Bushmen of Africa or the civilized Occidentals. They are on the same ladder which stretches from the solid earth into infinitude. Their progress upward is attended by joys and sorrows, successes and failures of its own. Yet it is doubtful if any attempt to promote it by a discreet investment of energy is attended with good results. "If you cannot speak home to the conscience at once, condescend to no lower plea: to reach the throne-room of the soul, Divine and holy things must pass by her grand and royal entry, and will refuse to creep up the back stairs of greediness and gain. Notwithstanding all that philosophers have said about the agreement of virtue with rational self-interest, it may be doubted whether their reasonings ever recalled

by a single step any wandering will; while it is notorious that the rugged earnestness of many a preacher, assuming a consciousness of sin and speaking to nothing else, has awakened multitudes to a new life, and carried them out of their former nature. In short, it would never have been prudent to do right, had it not been something infinitely more." [1] And as men ascend in civilization their outlook becomes broader and the moral demands increase. Lawlessness and its baneful results take on a darker hue in life's exalted stations. When men who occupy these violate their trust, the very elevation gives impetus to their descent, and one may reflect with Milton's Satan:

"No wonder fallen such a pernicious height." [2]

That certain acts are permissible at one period which are outlawed in a more enlightened age need occasion no difficulty, for the imperfect knowledge of the earlier stage forbade the discovery of any higher spring of action. A Greek would have been at a loss to classify the forms of virtue which are typical of the twentieth century. The range of self-control has widened immensely, and such virtues as chastity and temperance, with a new connotation under the Christian régime, are more than any others the keystone of the modern social organization.

Enough has been said to show that Martineau

[1] *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, p. 77.
[2] See also *St. Luke's Gospel* xii, 47, 48.

invariably lays stress on the sentiment from which motive and action spring. The lowest sources in the scale are censoriousness, vindictiveness, and suspicion; the highest are reverence and compassion. It is indicative of the excellent spirit that was in him that he should have placed reverence first, and nowhere more than in our own Republic should this priority be pondered. The magnificent rule which crowns this summary is also worthy of a place in every man's memory: "*Every action is* RIGHT, *which, in presence of a lower principle, follows a higher: every action is* WRONG, *which, in presence of a higher principle, follows a lower.*" [1]

The compassion which moved John Howard, Florence Nightingale, and Abraham Lincoln to rescue the prisoner, the sick, and the enslaved has in it eternal righteousness, because for them it meant the realization of their highest ideals of life and the utmost personal sacrifice for their accomplishment. Such examples adorn the ethical message we are here considering, and in itself it is a grateful contrast to the Utilitarianism of the preceding lecture. It shows the indescribable value of Martineau as a stimulating guide in matters of conduct, a counselor whose utterances irradiate many perplexing questions. When he tells us that ethical judgments have to be made quite as often between two orders of goodness as between actual good and

[1] *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, p. 270.

evil, and that no person has the right to neglect the highest duties confronting him, even though this neglect is concealed under the performance of lower ones, he supplies the preacher of righteousness with a timely homily from the Scripture, "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."[1] Human obligation to be and to do the best we know, under all possible circumstances, is absolute and endless. God expects nothing more from a man than his duty, but that includes all he can ever do. The false merit attached to works of supererogation is annihilated by the ethical infinitude of human nature and the divine perfection that governs it. Our best is demanded on all occasions; and when we have attempted the utmost, we are still unprofitable servants, in view of the undischarged obligations of an endless development.[2] Heroes and heroines, saints and martyrs, leaders and emancipators, whose story lights the summit of human possibility, have only fulfilled God's expectation of them. For them and for us Martineau's great ascription is true; an unexplored height and depth of moral grandeur, beauty, and achievement, in which the race is to be absorbed and glorified: "The rule of right, the symmetries of character, the requirements of perfection, are no provincialisms

[1] *St. Luke's Gospel* xi, 42.
[2] See also *St. Luke's Gospel* xvii, 10.

of this planet: they are known among the stars; they reign beyond Orion and the Southern Cross; they are wherever the universal Spirit is; and no subject mind, though it fly on one track forever, can escape beyond their bounds. Just as the arrival of light from deeps that extinguish parallax bears witness to the same ether there that vibrates here, and its spectrum reports that one chemistry spans the interval, so does the law of righteousness spring from its earthly base and embrace the empire of the heavens, the moment it becomes a communion between the heart of man and the life of God." [1]

[1] *A Study of Religion*, Vol. I, p. 26.

FIFTH LECTURE

JAMES MARTINEAU

"*I leave the plain, I climb the height;*
No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

* * * * * * *

I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams.

* * * * * * *

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
'*O just and faithful knight of God!*
Ride on! the prize is near.'"

Sir Galahad.—TENNYSON

JAMES MARTINEAU

PART II

I

The point of convergence for the religious teaching of Hegel, Lotze, and Martineau lay in their united recognition of the eternal presence and self-revelation of God in human consciousness. Hegelianism has lost ground in recent years because the "determinism" which is its natural corollary minimizes sin, precludes repentance, and weakens moral responsibility. It also fails to give any satisfactory account of personality, and furnishes no substantial grounds for individual immortality. Lotze's *Microcosmus* and Martineau's *Study of Religion* have much more in common, and the latter foresaw that they may eventually blend in the advancing tide of speculative thought. He spoke of Lotze as the one original contributor to the solution of philosophical religious problems — one whose constructive work was of the very highest and, without qualification, Christian. Both reached the same "belief in an ever-living God, a divine mind and will, ruling the universe and holding moral

relations with mankind."[1] But Lotze declared himself a spiritual monist, by which he meant that there is only one substance in the universe, spiritual life and energy, and yet that the Eternal One, by a partial differentiation of his own essential Being, calls into existence the world of nature and humanity. While God remains immanent in all His creatures, He gives to these finite and dependent existences, in progressive degrees, a real selfhood which culminates in man in a self-consciousness and moral freedom that enables him to know and even to resist God. John Fiske has advanced practically the same argument in his account of the crowning of physical with psychical and moral evolution, and the revelation by God in the completed man of His own presence and character. On the other hand, Martineau affirmed that for him monism, whether idealistic or materialistic, was tantamount to a denial of religion — at any rate in its logical results, though not in the consciousness of those who held it. His dualism seems to have arisen out of his aversion to pantheism; he persistently declined to believe in the identical oneness of man and God, either here or hereafter. He speaks of "the sense of authority," and says that if it means anything, "it means the discernment of something *higher than we*, having claims on our *self* — therefore

[1] See Martineau's *Life and Letters*, Vol. II, p. 410.

no mere part of it; — hovering over and transcending our personality, though also mingling with our consciousness and manifested through its intimations." [1] Men cannot interpret this sentiment within their own limits; they are irresistibly carried on to the recognition of another than themselves, One who has moral affinity with them, yet solemn rights over them. We encounter this Objective Authority without quitting the center of our own consciousness. The excellency and sanctity which He recognizes and reports are not contingent on our accidental apprehension; they have their seat in eternal reality, they hold their quality wherever found, and the revelation of their authority to one mind is valid for all.

Martineau traces the pathway from the moral consciousness to religious apprehension, and avows that every man is permitted to learn, within himself, that which "bears him out of himself, and raises him to the station of the Father of Spirits." [2] *A Study of Religion* written, as we have observed, when he had gone beyond his eightieth year, embodies his ripest meditations on the all-important theme. Its bases are found by him, in the native sense of man's moral responsibility and obligation. He places ethics before religion inasmuch as the ethical conscience reveals "the presence of an

[1] *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, p. 104.
[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 105.

authority that is in us, but superior to us, and which we spontaneously feel has a right to govern us." Thus his first concern is for the religion of the conscience rather than that of the cosmos. In the strieter sense Martineau is a philosophical theologian; Lotze a philosopher proper, the mirror of whose mind reflected the universe as few have done. The former is primarily an ethical and religious teacher whose metaphysic is narrowed by his beliefs on those issues; the latter a more inclusive and fundamental thinker whose range is wider, deeper, and firmer than Martineau's. According to the latter our moral experience not only naturally leads us toward belief in a Supreme and Perfect Being, but also toward belief in personal immortality. These intuitive apprehensions are in every man; they can be reverenced and obeyed; and if so, our loyalty to them is rewarded by a larger insight and an enriched knowledge. In God's light such children of His will see light.

But they may also be thinned out by critically destructive processes until they become a mere delusion, in which there is nothing more than disguised self-interest or the reflection of a prevalent social sentiment. The two tendencies are always present and operative; "ethics must either perfect itself in religion or disintegrate itself into hedonism"; and there is "an inevitable gravitation in all antitheo-

logical thinkers toward 'the greatest happiness principle.'" Further, "if the moral relations when thus displayed 'and honored by us' are ectypal miniatures of eternal realities in God, it is impossible not to raise the question of their duration in us. There is something incongruous in supposing that such a communion on our part with an eternal Being, and a communion in respect of eternal verities central to His essence, should have just begun to know itself for what it is, and then be extinguished." The immortality of man in Martineau's thought was coincident with another leading principle of his religious system — "the Universal Incarnation."

He states his position thus: "The Incarnation is true, not of Christ exclusively, but of Man universally, and God everlastingly. He bends into the human, to dwell there; and humanity is the susceptible organ of the divine. And the spiritual light in us which forms our higher life is 'of one substance' (ὁμοουσιον) with His own Righteousness, — its manifestation, with altered essence and authority, on the theater of our nature. . . . Of this grand and universal truth Christ became the revealer, not by being an exceptional personage (who could be a rule for nothing), but by being a signal instance of it so intense and impressive as to set fire to every veil that would longer hide it." In another connection

[1] *Essays, Reviews, and Addresses*, Vol. II, pp. 443–444.

he asks: "Is it not then a true conception that we see in the mind of Christ the very essence of the mind of God, in what He loves and requires to see in us . . . the filial devotion, the self-renunciation, the enthusiasm for all righteous affections which constitutes the ethics of all worlds? In opening to us the coëssentiality with God through His own personality did He show us what is true of His own individuality alone? On the contrary, He stands in virtue of it as the spiritual head of mankind, and what you predicate of Him in actuality is predicable of all in possibility. This interpretation of His life on earth carries the divine essence claimed for Him into our nature as His brethren. In Him as our representative we learn our summons and receive our adoption as children of God."[1] By virtue of this living union between God and man, His highest desires and best affections are divine and inspired; they are part of the very being of the All-wise; they are His perpetual self-revelation to us; and in them is contained the possibility of all religion.

It is necessary to show here that Martineau's views on religion underwent considerable change. He began where his first guide and teacher, Dr. Priestley, had ended; for Priestley, although a latitudinarian, believed in the value and authority of the Holy Scriptures as a divine revelation. He sought the confirmation of

[1] *Martineau's Life and Letters*, Vol. II, p. 481.

outward standards and proofs for the doctrine he accepted; and Martineau for a time followed his example. In the address he delivered before his ordination at Dublin he declared himself the servant of revelation, and spoke of "Jesus Christ, God's well-beloved Son." He said, "I acknowledge Him as the Mediator between God and man." He further refers to "His exaltation to that position which He now holds above all other created beings, where He lives evermore, and from which He shall hereafter judge the world in righteousness. . . . Not to honor Him as we honor the Father is to violate our allegiance to Him as the great Captain of our salvation." But Channing supplanted Priestley as the spiritual director of Martineau, and induced him to lay that stress upon conscience and the hidden man of the heart which now took the place of Priestley's insistence upon external credentials. Channing, too, was deposed when other disintegrating influences asserted themselves, and one by one the articles of Martineau's original creed disappeared. Miracles were dispensed with; the resurrection was a myth; sin as a huge racial impediment and disaster had never been accepted by him. He asserted that Jesus never claimed to be the Messiah, and his examination of the Gospels left few credible fragments of information about the history of Jesus. In 1898 he wrote: "We plainly want a New

Reformation to give us a religion that shall be tenable alike by the *natural soul* and by the *cultivated mind* of our age; and it can never be brought to the birth *alive* out of the Messianic preconceptions, or ecclesiastical dogmas, or physical cosmogonies; but must be drawn fresh, like the beatitudes, from the divine experiences of the Christlike soul, which are self-evidencing and wait for no visual miracle to vouch them. All that we spiritually know is thus given us in the person of Jesus; but not all that is told us of His person is of this character, or is in itself credible; and till the needful discrimination is effected between these two elements, our present Gospels will often mislead us. For in truth they are but anonymous traditions, authentic mixed with unauthentic, current in the second century."[1]

Dr. Martineau is not so thorough and satisfactory in his treatment of biblical exegesis and the New Testament literature as he is in philosophy and ethics. The touch is somewhat unfamiliar and the dogmatic hardness assertive. His great reputation finds little support in some of his statements concerning the sources of the Christian tradition. The profound thinker is lost for the moment in the ardent partizan. The variations between his earlier and later utterances seem to make good the charge of unstability; but while conscious

[1] *Life and Letters*, Vol. II, p. 244.

of this, he explains them as the substitution "of religion at first hand, straight out of the immediate interaction between the soul and God, for religion at second hand, fetched by copying out of anonymous traditions of the eastern Mediterranean eighteen centuries ago"; and he adds, "This has been the really directing, though hardly conscious, aim of my responsible years of life." Dr. Davison is correct in his substantiation of Martineau's own statement that here are two religions. For the sake of clearness let us remember that the religion of the man who rejects all spiritual authority but that of his own reason and conscience and the religion of the man who finds in Christ a direct revelation from God are not two forms of one religion; they are indeed two religions, widely separated now, and likely to be much more widely separated in the not distant future. The majority of men grow less dogmatic as they approach the ripening years. In this one respect Martineau was an exception; and it is the earlier Martineau who stands apart from his articulated system, and pleads for the spirit within the wheels. To him we turn with relief, unwilling that the worth and inspiration of his religious experience, as distinguished from his theological utterance, should be lost in the deepening doubts of his later years. Here we would fain abide with him; and if one apprehends him aright, he speaks

more freely and with lesser consciousness of a system which needs defense. He looked upon experience as the true test of religion and its legitimate sphere of verification. And experience meant for him a genuine sense of present spiritual union and reality springing from individual surrender to God. His definition of this is not unlike the Evangelical doctrine of conversion; it implies an awakening which results in the consecration of life and all its powers. "The moment of its new birth is the discovery that your gleaming is the everlasting real: no transparent brush of a fancied angel's wing, but the abiding presence and persuasion of the soul of souls." It was this emphasis on experience which led him to say that the Methodists, above all others, ought to show a ready adaptability to the changes in modern thought on account of the faith they reposed in their consciousness of the Divine Presence. When the highest we know becomes more than ideal; when men are so vitally brought into contact with it that they appropriate it as a part of themselves, they unite their lives with the very life of God, and are a part of that historic sainthood which has done His work in the world. This truth and its meaning for those who accept and use it has a noble expression in Martineau's parting injunction to the Liverpool congregation. His whole word and work among them, he avowed, had been deter-

mined by his deep faith in "the living union of God with humanity." He had endeavored to convince his people that God is in direct touch with human souls, communes with their spirits, and listens to their prayers. He is a God that is not only far off, but here; He can be seen and met on earth. He is not only in the "flashing scorn" and "bursting frown of thunder," but He speaks to each waiting soul in His still small voice. "*Here* is the dear and mighty God at home. . . . Day by day, from morn to night, under our rooftree and out upon the fields, in the mind that thinks, in the heart that aspires, in the nation that strives for the right, in the world that moves on its course, He lives with us, and manifests himself through us, with every variety of good."[1] Nor were such sentiments confined to his sermons and addresses; they permeate all his works, and especially the great chapter on "Natural and Revealed Religion" contained in *A Study of Religion*. In this he shows that all the interpretations of naturalistic religion empty the term "religion" of "every idea of personal and moral relationship between the human soul and God." He dwells on these relations continually, and even where they appear to be overshadowed by his philosophical ideas he is unconscious of the inconsistency.

But what of sin, death, and the future?

[1] *Essays, Reviews, and Addresses*, Vol. IV, p. 521.

How did he regard these? The reply is, with a sternness which no serious preacher could exceed. Mr. R. H. Hutton says that Martineau's sermon on *Christ's Treatment of Guilt* inspired him with "the fear of hell." One passage reads: "In many a hospital of mental disease you have doubtless seen a melancholy being, pacing to and fro with rapid strides and lost to everything around; wringing his hands in incommunicable suffering, and letting fall a low mutter rising quickly into the shrill cry; his features cut with the graver of sharp anguish: his eyelids drooping and showering ever scalding tears. It is the maniac of remorse. . . . He is the dread type of hell. He is absolutely sequestered, as many minds may be hereafter, incarcerated alone with his memories of objects and unaware of time; and every guilty soul may find itself standing alone in a theater peopled with the collected images of the ills that he has done; and, turn where he may, the features he has made sad with grief, the eyes he has lighted with passion, the infant faces he has suffused with needless tears, stare upon him with insufferable fixedness." And if thus the past be truly indestructible; if thus its fragments may be regathered; if its details of evil thought and act may be thus brought together and fused into one big agony, — it may be left to fools to make a mock of sin. Whatever the liberal theologians have said about sin as merely a

mistake, and retribution as an idea culled from the ethics of the nursery, it is clear that he regarded sin as a terrible fact, to be followed by a suffering which the sinner has wholly brought upon himself.

It was his genuine sense of present spiritual union with God, of the fellowship which springs from surrender to His love and grace, of the hatefulness of sin and the terror of its consequences, that made Martineau impatient with the sickly talk about ideals which has become the commonplace of our age. "It is well to remember that, so long as they are dreams of future possibility and not faiths in present realities, . . . they have no more solidity or steadiness than floating air-bubbles, gay in the sunshine and broken by the passing wind. You do not so much as touch the threshold of religion so long as you are detained by the phantoms of your thought." Men must realize their divine nature, not in a merely sympathetic way, but as an organic and organizing conviction ordering all their life and conduct; and, short of this, there is no worthy object given to them, they have not even reached the specific point of admiration. "Within the limits of pure sincerity no one can worship either a nature beneath him or an idea within him, however big may be the one . . . and however fine may be the other."[1]

[1] *Martineau's Life and Letters*, Vol. II, pp. 418, 419.

II

All religious philosophies are the attempt of the human mind to discover the deeper foundations of being, and the processes by which man apprehends the truth, and by which through experience the Temple of Faith is built. In prosecuting his researches in these problems Martineau evinced a profound insight, coupled with an imaginative daring and a skill in the arts of literary craftsmanship which give his works unique distinction. The "Religion of Causation" may be arrived at from the ascertained facts of science, and this gives us an idea of God as the Creator of all: but the result is derived, not immediate; it is logical, not intuitional; and, on this ground, for him it loses value. He goes so far as to reason in the same way concerning conscience, which naturally inclines to Theism, and from which one may proceed to establish the fact of an All-righteous Ruler. This, again, is a logical *via media*. Neither of these arguments from science or conscience, singly or together, gives any adequate meaning to religion. And it is owing to their deficiencies that the religion of the spirit demands unhampered communion between the human and the divine, an intercourse that goes beyond the spheres of natural and even moral law. Martineau hardly does justice to the fact that any

religious belief — whether described as the religion of conscience or of causation, whether immediate or derived in the methods of its apprehension and appropriation — is due to the all-pervading life of God. Granted that some men's temperament and actual pursuits lead them to an inferential knowledge of God reached by argumentation, is He not their guide as well as their goal? Why separate God's immediate presence from these things? He is the God of the rationalizing Aristotle as well as of the intuitive Plato. But Martineau had a deep conviction that, if God were not found within the human spirit, He would not be found beyond it; and also a fear that, under much prevalent rationalizing, the Blessed Name, so personal and real to him, would come to stand for the order of nature, inviolable, yet blind. Similarly the moral ideal becomes merely human, a general conviction of what ought to be; and as soon as the living intercourse with the Divine is forfeited, this ideal loses its charm and power. In those churches where the living and immediate presence of Jehovah is denied or ignored, the worship of God ceases, and discourses on science, art, literature, and history usurp the place of genuine devotion. These are praiseworthy pursuits, but they never appear more distasteful than when presented in the threadbare and colorless garments of a Religion supposed to be dead. In a letter to the Rev.

Charles Wicksteed, Nov. 20, 1876, deploring the general trend of prevailing Unitarianism, he wrote: "I have nearly come to the conclusion that we are on the downward path and nearing the last stage of our *religious* history. Religion, once drifting away from the Personality of God and resolved into Moral Idealism (and this is the tendency with our young men), loses all that is distinctive and melts into general culture. From this fate the Churches are protected which, finding their center of gravity in the Incarnation, unite the Divine and the Human in the representative of our nature, and construe our own moral phenomena into personal relations with the All-holy Mind. I see in this a germ of fruitfulness; in the other, only a spreading barrenness." [1]

The tracing of will as the one force in the universe is a fine philosophical performance, yet glittering with those sparkling phrases which darkened the discourse by reason of excessive light, and displaying a logic that makes one smile because of its adroitness. We are taken safely through deep metaphysical waters; we do battle vicariously with Tyndall, Huxley, Spencer, and the other critics of Theism; we consider the pros and cons of every dispute that marked the nineteenth century; and more often than not we say "aye" to Martineau. True, he indulges in speculative ventures which

[1] Martineau's *Life and Letters*, Vol. II, p. 32.

do not convince us, as, for instance, in his treatment of the almightiness and omniscience of God. He taught that the term "almighty" is "warranted only if it is content to cover all the might there is; and must not be understood to mean mighty for absolutely all things." Again, in discussing moral evil, he says that, "notwithstanding the supreme causality of God, it is rigorously true that only in a very restricted sense can He be held the author of moral evil. He is no doubt the source of its possibility." As a sequel to these views he held the one on the limitation of God's knowledge; for he claimed that omniscience has limited itself with regard to the details of human action. The dualism of Martineau is the origin of these defects in his Theism. His emphasis on the personality and the will of man is so strong that he is obliged to make room for their original actions by modifying the all-power and all-knowledge of the Deity; and he does this on the ground that the very problem of knowledge, as solved by the best minds, demands a *Me* and a *not-Me*, not only now, but hereafter. The issue is highly speculative, and need not detain us here; it is, however, an illustration of the thoroughness with which he goes to the root of things and of the honesty with which he states his conclusions. We do not wish to suggest that Martineau's pages are full of mediæval subtleties, but simply that he seldom shirked a diffi-

culty and never hesitated to pronounce an opinion.

His great service to Christianity is twofold: the consolidating of Theism on a philosophical basis, and the convincing declaration that the self-revealing presence of God is in all men. This idea was never absent from his mind. To him it was the one important thing, and, for the sake of establishing its foundations more firmly than before, he undertook the work of defending Theism against the attacks of its enemies, and of justifying its great truths in the areas of reason. Seldom do we meet in one personality a union of the preacher, the literary artist, the theologian, and the philosopher; yet these qualities were strikingly united in James Martineau. Not that his appeal was addressed to all men; he never hoped to do so much. His message, as we have hinted, was defective for those in whom vicious and degenerate impulses prevail. They need the regenerating and encompassing power of a more vital and complete religion. It was for such sheep, lost and shepherdless, that Christ Jesus gave Himself. They were His peculiar care, and in their behalf He proclaimed a gospel which Martineau did not fully understand, expound, or enforce, although he faithfully discharged the duty of giving Christianity a more adequate philosophical setting. Had he mingled with the common people in their

daily struggle, he would have found that the actual conditions of human necessity demand a concrete and positive evangel, and that even in other and higher spheres men frequently conquer not so much by native intuitions as by the divine aggression of an overwhelming and transforming power. This type of saint-hood, of which Paul, Augustine, Luther, and Wesley are prominent examples, was at once transferred from the kingdom of darkness into that of light. Nor can we form any right estimate of Christian teaching unless we take our stand for a comprehensive induction which shall cover all the facts of that historic transference.

But there are men specially called to think of God, freedom and Immortality, and among these Martineau will take a high place. Amid the jangle of conflicting creeds and churches he did a saving work by enabling many to plant their feet on the immovable rock, by giving them the wisdom of things in their true proportion, and by showing the signs of genuine authority. Popes and priesthoods, Bible supremacies and ecclesiastical groups, are passed in review, until he arrives at the soul of man himself, by which at times he seems to mean Emerson's "oversoul," that "vast, living, moving, inspiring, progressive spirit which is leading us all into light, wisdom, and truth." It has a place in the outer world of nature, but

chiefly resides in man, "whose spirit is the audience-chamber of the Eternal." From it sprang all religions, literatures, churches, and creeds, and by it they must be served and made effectual. Men ascend to the heights and descend to the depths in search of a resting-place for their beliefs, when the word is nigh them, in their hearts and in their conscience, if they can but believe. A mother's love, he avers, affords a truer glimpse of God than Calvin's stern and elaborated logic, and the purity of the human is the window through which men see the Divine. It is in the presence of such higher natures that we are enabled to stimulate the springs of action till they become the dynamic of a realized holiness in life and deed.

III

In some respects the work of Schleiermacher in Germany was paralleled by Martineau's work in England. The moral sense was his favorite subject of interpretation, as the emotions were of Schleiermacher. Neither could conceive of religion save in terms of the subjective consciousness and apart from anything external. The mysticism which is found in Martineau's life and philosophy, bright, clear, and intellectual though they are, is very real, and suggests many comparisons with the famous German preacher and theologian. Martineau's

philosophical system is by no means free from difficulties, as we have seen; and, in spite of the value of his constructive Theism, he cannot be said to have founded a new school of thought. His marvelous play of rhetoric is employed to set forth the older ideas, which are displayed to the utmost advantage in his pages. In years to come he will not live through the philosophical treatises, although they will be found on the shelves of serious students; the books which will bring him nearest to the hearts of Christian people are his devotional works. These volumes are the output of a profound mind and a large heart; one knows not whether the feeling is deeper than the thought, or the thought deeper than the feeling. And if the instinctive recognition of God and truth as taught by him is mystic rather than rational in method, it would be difficult to overestimate the corrective value of so eloquent a pleading for the religion of the heart as contrasted with the crudities of the gospel of "following nature" or of obeying the behests of any social group. He lived at a time when science in some associations was raising its head all too proudly, and what it did not scornfully despise in religion was left to the sneers of a pseudo-philosophy. Against this Goliath the author of *The Seat of Authority in Religion* was a valiant David; yet his significance for the future does not consist in acute arguments,

lofty appeals, or chiseled phrases, but in his ability to arouse the dormant consciousness of the Divine within us. It is a great work to save some superior intellect from doubt and despair, and this Martineau has repeatedly done. But the thoughtful though not fastidiously critical reader will most esteem the revelation of the inner light as contained in Martineau's sermons — sermons which are already numbered among the treasures of devotional literature.

A philosophy is sure to have its vulnerable parts. Professor Pattison asserts that Martineau's view of conscience is peculiar and now out of date; while Professor Carpenter suggests that his essential work as a thinker was done before the *Origin of Species* appeared, and was a brilliant setting of previous Scottish intuitionalism. Even Martineau himself admits that metaphysics only reinstates us where we intuitively stood. On the processes of conscience Martineau may be out of date, but on the inner light he will continue to live; for this is a truth that can never die, from it we feel and reason toward the living Cause and the living Righteousness. The sense of obligation, which is the fundamental ethical fact, is also the chief bond which unites morals and religion; and certain elements of our own consciousness give ground for the inference that all power and perfection coalesce in a personal and omnipotent Being. This intellectual and moral rationalism rests on

our intuitions, and the very constitution of the human soul provides for an immediate apprehension of the Creator. A scrutiny of the byways of modern theology shows that these ideas are gaining ground; and although they sometimes assume erratic forms, and find embodiment in bizarre language, they indicate that what is called "the God within" is only a popular rendering of Martineau's intuitionalism and his teaching concerning the innate goodness of the human heart. It is to be regretted that fantasy and extravagance should invade the realm of divine truth; but no period has been free from their harmful influences, and the presence of a travesty is, after all, an evidence that the reality exists. Whatever defects we think we see in the teaching of James Martineau; as a man of God, as a preacher and writer, as an honest seeker after truth, he stands almost peerless among his contemporaries. An American minister wrote to him a few years before his death, asking him how in old age he regarded the world and his own Church. His reply was that, had he to live by sight of the prevailing social and spiritual tendencies, he would breathe his parting word more in tune with Jeremiah than Isaiah. He had less and less hope every year of Unitarianism participating in the future of English religious history. "But," he continued, "all the divine possibilities remain locked in our humanity, and are

sure, either here or there, to free themselves into realization. Resting in this, I can lay to sleep all impatient haste, and wait His time."

Martineau's life was in many ways a sustained and noble triumph. He struck hard and he struck home at the materialism which was waning when his chief works appeared. He aided the evolutionary theory in defeating the cold and mechanical Deism of the early nineteenth century. Although he contended for the divine immanence, he never lost his grasp on the transcendent God. His Theism suffered no approach to Pantheism. The religious history of mankind is indebted to his positive teaching, and to his earnest and encouraging attitude on those questions which must always occupy the thought of men and women who ponder the deep things of God. We take leave of this chosen servant of the Highest Will in his own words — words in which he argues for the life of immortality beyond, words which have a direct meaning for his own illustrious character and services:

"I do not know that there is anything in nature (unless indeed it be the reputed blotting out of suns in the stellar heavens) which can be compared in wastefulness with the extinction of great minds: their gathered resources, their matured skill, their luminous insight, their unfailing tact, are not like instincts that can be handed down; they are absolutely personal

and inalienable, grand conditions of future power unavailable for the race, and perfect for an ulterior growth of the individual. If that growth is not to be, the most brilliant genius bursts and vanishes as a firework in the night. A mind of balanced and finished faculties is a production at once of infinite delicacy and of most enduring constitution; lodged in a fast-perishing organism, it is like a perfect set of astronomical instruments, misplaced in an observatory shaken by earthquakes or caving in with decay. The lenses are true, the mirrors without a speck, the movements smooth, the micrometers exact: what shall the Master do but save the precious system, refined with so much care, and build for it a new house that shall be founded on a 'rock'?"

SIXTH LECTURE

MATTHEW ARNOLD

God knows it, I am with you! If to prize
Those virtues, prized and practised by too few,
But prized, but loved, but eminent in you,
Man's fundamental life; if to despise
The barren optimistic sophistries
Of comfortable moles, whom what they do
Teaches the limit of the just and true
(And for such doing they require not eyes);
If sadness at the long heart-wasting show
Wherein earth's great ones are disquieted;
If thoughts, not idle, while before me flow
The armies of the homeless and unfed,—
If these are yours, if this is what you are,
Then am I yours, and what you feel I share.

ARNOLD. — *To a Republican Friend.*

MATTHEW ARNOLD

PART I

I

WHEN Thomas Arnold became a candidate for the Head-Mastership of Rugby, Dr. Hawkins, provost of Oriel College, Oxford, predicted that if he were elected "he would change the face of education all through the public schools of England." This he did, not so much by his erudition as by the power of his contagious personality. The morale and discipline of his pupils made Rugby an object-lesson for all similar institutions, and when men spoke of the place they thought of Arnold. Such celebrities as Dean Stanley, A. H. Clough, Thomas Hughes, and his own son Matthew, were known as "Arnold's men," — a sufficient testimony in itself to the weighty influence of the teacher who impressed himself so deeply upon them. In his later life he was appointed Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, where his lectures attracted considerable attention. He held authoritative views on the general state of the nation which affected the religion, education, and politics of the times. As a teacher he stood high, and as a preacher

even higher. He was a man of deep feeling, great dignity, and an almost overwhelming strength of nature. Yet that nature was ardent and affectionate, and animated by a keen sense of justice. He was singularly pure in motive and sincere in aim, and his literary style indicated these qualities. It was manly and robust, the fitting expression of a brilliant, learned, and generous mind. All his gifts were concentrated in the work for the formation of the character of the youth of his country. By means of one public school he changed to an appreciable degree the superstructure of British society, and that change was transmitted in a measure to the empire over whose destinies Britain presides.

His eldest son, Matthew, was born on Christmas eve, 1822, at Laleham on the River Thames, a quiet retreat midway between Staines and Chertsey. Towering beyond these towns is the bold front of Windsor's "sovran hill," crowned with the royal residence, and looking down upon Henry VI's famous foundation of Eton. Arnold's inherent love of nature was quickened by the beautiful pastoral scenery of the Thames valley. He visited his birthplace in 1848, and wrote to his sister, "Yesterday I was at Chertsey, the poetic town of our childhood. . . . It is across the river, reached by no bridges and roads, but by the primitive ferry, the meadow path, the Abbey

River with its wooden bridge, and the narrow lane by the old wall."

During the whole of his life, and especially after the death of his father, the remarkable character and gifts of Arnold's mother made her the chosen companion and correspondent of her children. Her ancestral home was at Fox How in the Lake Country, where she spent more than thirty years of widowhood, in close proximity to Wordsworth and the rest of the Lake poets. Matthew naturally developed a warm admiration for Wordsworth, and in later life he became his penetrating and sympathetic interpreter.

Beyond this bare outline, little is known of Arnold's schooldays and earlier manhood. His letters are the only sources of information; but these do not indulge in retrospect, and before his thirtieth year they supply nothing of moment. Even the origin of his first poems is shrouded in mystery, and it is now impossible for us to scan the psychological background of these adventures into literature. Beginning his school life at Laleham, he was afterward sent to Winchester, and in August, 1837, followed his father to Rugby. Here he obtained the prize for his poem *Alaric at Rome;* and in 1840 he was awarded an open scholarship at Balliol College, Oxford. He had been at the University only one year when the lamented death of his father changed in many respects

the current of his life. It has been suggested that there might have been a lack of intellectual sympathy between the two; but this is scarcely worthy of credence, for it is extremely doubtful whether the later critic of dogma could have foreseen at such an early period the extent to which his independent thought would eventually take him.[1] Certainly the references to his father breathe nothing save exceptional tenderness and filial affection, of which the poem *Rugby Chapel* is a lasting monument. Standing before his father's tomb, he asks the question:

"O strong soul, by what shore
Tarriest thou now? For that force,
Surely, has not been left vain!
Somewhere, surely, afar,
In the sounding labor-house vast
Of being, is practised that strength,
Zealous, beneficent, firm!

* * * * * * *

And through thee I believe
In the noble and great who are gone;
Pure souls honor'd and blest
By former ages, who else—
Such, so soulless, so poor,
Is the race of men whom I see—
Seem'd but a dream of the heart,
Seem'd but a cry of desire.
Yes! I believe that there lived
Others like thee in the past,
Not like the men of the crowd
Who all round me to-day
Bluster or cringe, and make life

[1] See W. H. Dawson's *Matthew Arnold*, pp. 156–157.

Hideous, and arid, and vile;
But souls temper'd with fire,
Fervent, heroic, and good,
Helpers and friends of mankind."

During Arnold's university days the Tractarian Movement was passing into the troubled period which culminated in the withdrawal of John Henry Newman from the Anglican Church. To quote his own phrase, Newman "was upon his death-bed," so far as membership in that communion was concerned. This, however, was known only to few, and a certain awe and wonder continued to encircle the figure of the great preacher. His four-o'clock sermons at St. Mary's drew the University to his feet. Arnold watched the convulsion of the religious life of the Establishment which followed Newman's retirement to Littlemore, without evincing any marked interest. Doubtless he had inherited from his father a strong aversion to Newman as a teacher and Tractarianism as a movement. His chosen friends in college were John Duke Coleridge, afterward Lord Chief Justice of England, and John Campbell Shairp, the author of an excellent biography of Burns, and Principal of St. Andrews University, Scotland. Of the Oxford Arnold knew seventy years ago there is little left to-day. The Royal Commission appointed in 1850 to reform the Universities ended a formal organization which had been in existence since

the Middle Ages. But Balliol in the early forties, as now, was distinguished for its intellectual activity; and its Master, Dr. Jenkins, conserved with commendable energy the highest interests of the college.

In 1843 Arnold won the Newdigate prize with a poem on *Cromwell*. He and Tennyson reversed the rule that college rewards for poetry do not fall to poets. Yet there is no particular reason why Arnold should have been an exception so far as the merit of *Cromwell* is concerned; in fact, it is scarcely equal to *Alaric at Rome*. The Byronic atmosphere pervades the earlier poem, and a Wordsworthian flavor is distinctly perceptible in the Newdigate; but we search in vain for any throb of inspiration in the undisturbed serenity of these youthful rhymings. A glimpse of Arnold's university days is obtained in the records of a debating society called "The Decade," the rallying-ground of a small coterie of controversialists who, to quote the words of one of them, fought to the stumps of their intellects. As a student he did only moderately well; but his strength and promise were recognized by his election to an Oriel fellowship in 1845, an honor which would have gladdened the heart of his father had he lived to see it, and which had previously been bestowed upon that father, upon Newman, and Dean Church. He shared with every son of Oxford the ardent devotion they freely give to

her, and he expressed it in a memorable passage which one cannot refrain from quoting at length:

"Beautiful city! so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene!

'There are our young barbarians, all at play!'

And yet, steeped in sentiment as she lies, spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection, — to beauty, in a word, which is only truth seen from another side? — nearer, perhaps, than all the science of Tübingen. Adorable dreamer, whose heart has been so romantic! who hast given thyself so prodigally, given thyself to sides and to heroes not mine, only never to the Philistines! home of lost causes, and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties! what example could ever so inspire us to keep down the Philistine in ourselves, what teacher could ever so save us from that bondage to which we are all prone, that bondage which Goethe, in his incomparable lines on the death of Schiller, makes it his friend's highest praise (and nobly did Schiller deserve the praise) to have left miles out of sight behind him; — the

bondage of '*was uns alle bändigt, Das Gemeine!*' She will forgive me, even if I have unwittingly drawn upon her a shot or two aimed at her unworthy son; for she is generous, and the cause in which I fight is, after all, hers. Apparitions of a day, what is our puny warfare against the Philistines, compared with the warfare which this queen of romance has been waging against them for centuries, and will wage after we are gone?" [1]

Notwithstanding this outburst, Oxford and Arnold were meant to dwell apart; he could not content himself to become a typical college don. He was too much a lover of society, his outlook was too wide and varied, his interests too numerous, and his temper too anti-clerical for this sort of dignified retirement. The position not only conflicted with his inclinations, it offended his pride. His self-consciousness clashed with the calm, majestic predominance of the University, and his restless and aspiring spirit chafed under the restraint of her conservatism. He obtained a classical tutorship at Rugby, where he served for a short time under Archibald Campbell Tait, afterward the Archbishop of Canterbury. Thus he began, in his father's school, and with his father's successor, his lifelong connection with education. In 1847 he acted as private secretary to Lord Lansdowne, an aristocratic patron of young men of

[1] Preface to *Essays in Criticism*, First Series.

talent, who was quick to recognize the parliamentary ambitions of Macaulay, and who gave Arnold the only start in life he owed to any one beyond himself. In 1851 Lansdowne secured for him an appointment as Government inspector of schools; and he became at twenty-eight years of age, what he afterward remained, practically an independent man. The work was uncongenial and the remuneration scanty; yet he could make a considerable reservation of his time and energy for literary pursuits, and on the whole it proved sufficient for his necessities. His marriage to the daughter of Mr. Justice Wightman followed shortly after his appointment to the inspectorship. He was called to the Bar, but limited his legal practice to attending the interesting cases over which his father-in-law presided. The remainder of his days was preëmpted by domestic joys and sorrows and the duties of his office. He was fortunate in that he could arrange at will the extent of his employment; and while he would have been an ideal candidate for any public office which would have left him freer to follow his bent, he was delivered from the ill fortune of some who have had equal gifts and less opportunity.

II

As a poet, Arnold wrote in a period of poetical restriction, when the province of prose had

been enlarged by such picturesque and musical stylists as Landor, Carlyle, and Ruskin. This extension marks a natural development of language. Men first express themselves in poetical terms, later in those of prose, and afterward these coalesce. But the coalition somewhat contracted the line of English poetry. This contraction may not have been perceptible at the time, for it is only when an age has gone forward that the literature which reflects it can be adequately estimated. It is therefore premature to hazard any final opinion respecting Arnold's rank among his fellow poets. Professor R. Y. Tyrell warns us against such hasty assignments in his article on "Our Debt to Latin Poetry as Distinguished from the Greek." He says: "From the earliest dawn of letters to the incipient decay in the Silver Age we meet with formal attestations, and from good authority too, that men who are now to us mere names once had the fame of a Milton or a Tennyson. Nepos refers to a poet of whom he, a responsible critic, is able to say, 'I can well affirm that he is our most brilliant poet since Lucretius and Catullus.' Of whom is he speaking? Of one Julius Calidus, of whose existence we should have been unaware but for this passage. Tibullus, who ought to know, tells us that no one, not even Virgil, . . . 'came nearer to the immortal Homer' than one Valgius. But for the caprice of time we might now be quot-

ing from Calid and Valge as from Lucan and Virgil. Thus does fame scatter with indifferent hand the laurels of triumph and the poppies of oblivion."[1] Chastened by the reflections this criticism excites, the layman in literary matters can do little except name Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning as the representatives in that great succession of which Shakespeare and Milton are the hierarchs. How much which the modern group has written will survive must be left to the cooler judgment of posterity. Contemporary opinions upon them may be reversed, and again they may be confirmed and even increased. The order of their merit cannot be settled now; we cannot even say with certainty who will find a place in the lists future generations will endorse.

So far as Arnold is concerned, he impresses us with his breadth, for he toiled in every field of literature. But poetry was his first love, and his ideals concerning it were elevated. His most conspicuous note was clearness; "and to clearness he added singular grace, great skill in phrase-making, great aptitude for beautiful description, perfect naturalness, absolute ease."[2] His touch has delicacy and subdued charm; but his verse lacks popular fiber, because he is swayed by ideas rather than by sublime moods. He defines poetry as a

[1] See *Nineteenth Century*, April, 1911.
[2] G. W. E. Russell's, *Matthew Arnold* (1904), p. 9.

twofold interpretation: "it interprets by expressing with magical felicity the physiognomy and movement of the outer world," and by expressing "with inspired conviction the ideas and laws of the inward world of man's moral and spiritual life." [1] That he did not round out his practice to the boundaries of his theory is nothing against him; nor is the further fact that he wrote his greatest poem, *The Scholar Gypsy*, when he was thirty years of age, and that after 1867, when *New Poems* appeared, he wrote poetry sparingly. The height of his ideals might have provoked this sterility, although it has been otherwise explained. His friends say that the elegiac spirit, which was his special gift, was harassed by his official responsibilities; or, again, that he was frozen into silence by the neglect and indifference with which his verse was treated. But had his poetic vein been sufficiently full-blooded, it should have proved superior to these restraints. His was not inevitable poetry, like that of Burns, leaping forth and submerging all obstacles; it was essentially critical in soul and substance, and, despite the exquisiteness of the quality, the flow was intermittent. The three canons of Milton, that poetry should be *simple*, *sensuous*, and *passionate*, cannot be applied to Arnold's verse.

He disliked romanticism, and deplored its

[1] Introduction to *Essays in Criticism*, First Series.

excess in the early nineteenth-century poets. They were forced to indulge in it to cover their impoverished resources; did they know more, they would imagine less. In regard to forms of expression, he urged that there was no surer test of excellent poetry than constantly to keep in one's own mind the choice lines of the greater poets, and to apply these as a touchstone to other claimants. The restrained and severe purity of his diction reveals his close observance of this rule. With the possible exception of Milton, Arnold was better acquainted with the best that poets have uttered from Homer downward than any other English author. He said that the Byronic school had plenty of energy, and creative force, but was not sufficiently aware of the classical poets and dramatists. This cannot be charged against his work; for it was saturated with them, so much so that some one has declared a classical education necessary to understand him. This is an exaggeration; yet, unless the reader's knowledge is fairly comprehensive and his taste for correct and applicable speech well founded and refined, he is not likely to enjoy Arnold. His chief appeal is to the truly educated; to those in whom the fruits of knowledge have sufficiently ripened to enable them to appreciate his subtle thought and delicate shades of meaning. He stands in the nineteenth century, an entreating mediator between the ideals and

forms of Hellenic thought and expression and those of the modern period. Sir Henry Maine's sweeping assertion that, except the blind forces of nature, nothing moves in this world which is not Greek in its origin, would not have received Arnold's assent; for he deplored the prevalence of the Hebraic spirit. In so far as his genius permitted, he pealed forth at intervals a music full of recurrent significance and echoing the best traditions of the Attic masters.

On the 21st of July, 1849, he published the *Sonnet Addressed to the Hungarian Nation.* This did no more to advance his standing than *Alaric at Rome* or *Cromwell* had done to indicate his powers. *The Strayed Reveler and Other Poems* appeared in the same year; *Empedocles on Etna* in 1852; and the first volume that bore his name in 1853. The last publication was entitled *Poems;* it was a reprint of the former editions, with some omissions and such important additional compositions as *Sohrab and Rustum*, *The Church of Brou*, *Requiescat*, and *The Scholar Gypsy.* These poems are among the best products of the intellectual movement which prevailed from 1850 to 1870. The sense of impending change was then everywhere present. Science, about to accept evolution, was awakening from its dogmatic slumber; art was reviving under the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites; Anglican ecclesiasticism was looking toward mediævalism; and English thought

was dominated by the German philosophers. These movements weighed down the poetry of Arnold. He wrote for an epoch in which the current doctrines of religion, politics, and the social system were alike decaying; and, lacking the confident optimism and intellectual breadth of Browning, he stood mournful and mute with no positive message for his age. It was a time when there was no shelter to grow ripe, no leisure to grow wise. The conflict and complexity oppressed him; and while he hoped for a reconciliation and an adjustment, it was in a melancholy way, and he offered no solution for the difficulties of the situation. We should expect to find that his tone is in harmony with these conceptions, refined, thoughtful, sad. And so it is; even *Rugby Chapel* is tinged with this catholic pensiveness. While he admired Wordsworth, sharing his love of nature with inborn passion, devoting one of the best of his critical essays to him, and making the finest selection from his poetry that we possess, he nevertheless viewed the calm and trust of the Lake Poet as an aspiration rather than an attainment — an aspiration which the new age and its conditions did not favor. His famous dictum that poetry is a criticism of life may be construed as meaning that poetry is the crowning fruit of a criticism of life, and consequently that the value of his poetry consists in the truth and beauty of

his generalizations.[1] These are filled with the yearning desire for all which might have been. We see it plainly in *Resignation*, a poem of his early volume, and again in *Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse.*

> "Enough, we live! — and if a life,
> With large results so little rife,
> Though bearable, seems hardly worth
> This pomp of worlds, this pain of birth;
> Yet, Fausta! the mute turf we tread,
> The solemn hills around us spread,
> This stream which falls incessantly,
> The strange-scrawl'd rocks, the lonely sky,
> If I might lend their life a voice,
> Seem to bear rather than rejoice.
> And even could the intemperate prayer
> Man iterates, while these forbear,
> For movement, for an ampler sphere,
> Pierce Fate's impenetrable ear;
> Not milder is the general lot
> Because our spirits have forgot,
> In action's dizzying eddy whirl'd,
> The something that infects the world."[2]
>
> * * * * * * *
>
> Our fathers water'd with their tears
> This sea of time whereon we sail;
> Their voices were in all men's ears
> Who passed within their puissant hail.
> Still the same ocean round us raves,
> But we stand mute, and watch the waves."[3]

This oppression is frequently associated with his outlook on

[1] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th edition, Vol. II, p. 638.
[2] *The Poetical Works of Arnold* (1895), p. 61.
[3] *Ibid., Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse*, pp. 321–322.

"The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea,"[1]

five words whose haunting beauty can hardly be surpassed in any language. Its falling tides on Dover Beach arouse in him the painful sense of the lessening of religious faith:

"The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd;
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating to the breath
Of the night-wind down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world." [2]

The lucidity and thorough craftsmanship of Arnold's poetry could not overcome the dislike of the average mind for such an attitude as is here described. Yet better things might have been expected from the scholarly critics. They should have seen that the trend of his nature compelled him to say much that was as unwelcome to him as to them. For, despite his birth and training, he was constitutionally incapable of great faith; indeed, life would have been easier for him had such not been the case. He showed this in the pain his doubts created, and in the sympathy he had with things he could not accept. But he refused to forsake the path over which there shone "the high white star of truth." Right or wrong, he would not play false with reason and loyalty as he

[1] *The Poetical Works of Arnold, To Marguerite*, p. 198.
[2] *Ibid., Dover Beach* (1895), p. 296.

understood them. If the critics gave him little heed, the reading public gave him less. Some of his best work was contained in his first two volumes, and these were withdrawn from circulation. The explanation for such neglect is found, in part, in the decadent state of English criticism from 1825 to 1860. This decadence had much to do with his later essays in the realm of criticism. Others quite as gifted experienced a measure of the same ignorance and misunderstanding. Tennyson was slowly and reluctantly accepted; Browning for a long time was refused a hearing; Carlyle could make no terms with the older stylists and so he defied them all; Ruskin offended the young arbiters of prose; George Borrow's *Lavengro* went a-begging; and FitzGerald's *Omar Khayyám* was ignored.

Professor Saintsbury considers Arnold's first volume, though unequal, a wonderful production for a man still under thirty. Such lines as these from *Mycerinus* —

> "And prayers, and gifts, and tears, are fruitless all,
> And the night waxes, and the shadows fall";

and the less-quoted ones in the concluding portion of the poem —

> "While the deep-burnish'd foliage overhead
> Splinter'd the silver arrows of the moon," —

detain us by their authority. The sonnet on Shakespeare was a bold attempt which nearly

succeeded. The second volume contained two larger and more ambitious poems and thirty-three smaller ones, of which two were never reprinted. It was again a varied achievement, and the author withdrew it shortly after publication. The memorial verses on Wordsworth were sufficient in themselves to give distinction to the book, and in *Summer Night* Arnold won a triumph over himself. His vague agnosticism was swept away by a wave of genuine feeling. Here "the lips are touched at last; the eyes thoroughly opened to see what the lips shall speak; the brain almost unconsciously frames and fills the adequate and consistent scheme — the false rhymes are nowhere; the imperfect phrases, the little sham simplicities or pedantries, hide themselves, and the poet is free, from the splendid opening landscape, through the meditative exposition and the fine picture of the shipwreck, to the magnificent final invocation of the 'clearness divine.'" [1]

Space forbids any extended mention of *Sohrab and Rustum*, based on the old theme of a father and son who never knew each other until it was too late, and whose struggles ended in the father's enlightenment and consequent despair, and the son's acquiescence in his father's will. The *Requiescat*, notable for its simplicity and pathos, must be passed over;

[1] See Saintsbury's *Matthew Arnold*, p. 27.

but let me emphasize in a word the gem of Arnold's poems, *The Scholar Gypsy*, with its Oxonian setting and its stately swing and sway of stanza, mounting to the culminating lines:

> "Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
> Still clutching the inviolable shade."

On May 5, 1857, Arnold was elected by Convocation to the Chair of Poetry at Oxford. He was the first layman who had occupied it, and the election showed that his works had at last secured the sympathy and support of a conservative yet enlightened group of scholars and literary people. The professorship meant much for him, and more for the English literature of his time. The death of Wordsworth, Macaulay, and Leigh Hunt ended the traditions of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth. True, Walter Savage Landor was still living; but he had always dwelt alone. The later men — Carlyle, Thackeray, Dickens, FitzGerald, Mill, Tennyson, Browning — were now well to the front, and Arnold was among these contemporaries as the poet of the mind. His work is clear-cut, finely finished, like specimens of classical sculpture, and like them in its polish and marble coldness. The larger and more fascinating themes of love and passion seem beyond him, and his dramatic poems are too reflective, too restrained; they lack the vividness and movement which characterize the highest work of

this order. Although many of his passages are models of clearness and of concentration, they rarely rise to the highest levels. But with the minor strain of the elegy he is more at home, and ever and anon a throb of emotion, a sense of tears, is perceptible. His gentle yet firm strategy of thought and speech wages war on carelessness and frivolity. The courage which always distinguishes him is eminent in his verse. He never turns aside when evil is to be rebuked. And those who follow him will be conscious that "he is disengaged from the weak and the temporary, a source of strength, if not of joy."

III

Arnold loved England, and earnestly desired her betterment. His tenure of the Chair of Poetry at Oxford quickened this desire, and he knew no better service to render her than to repair the defects in her intellectual and literary history, which were due, as he conceived it, to the lack of a regulative and well-ordered critical function. His own poetry had been received, it so far as it was received at all, in such a haphazard manner, and with such an absence of true and balanced judgment, that he determined to differentiate between criticism which was personal and sentimental and that which was canonical and scientific. This determination was not a hasty one; it had been hinted as

early as 1853, when he called attention, in the preface of his *Poems*, to the superiority of Continental criticism as compared with that of England. On the Continent, and especially in France, writers were guided by ascertained precedents and sustained by carefully devised rules, which did not permit individual tastes to run riot or idiosyncrasies to unduly prevail. Recognized standards of excellence, in both poetry and prose, were established and conserved by such organizations as the French Academy; and Arnold coveted a similar literary Senatus which should govern and direct the higher forms of English literature. The scheme was an exalted one: but he seems to have forgotten that each nation produces after its kind; or if he remembered it, he was so much of a pedagogue, that, to quote his own remark about the Americans, "Few stocks could be trusted to grow up properly without having a priesthood and an aristocracy to act as their schoolmasters at some time or other of their natural existence." That he exaggerated the value of German and French letters at the expense of those of England is beyond doubt. He regrets that "not very much of current English literature comes into the 'best that is known and thought in the world' — certainly less than that of France or Germany." [1] When it is recalled that the Germans have possessed

[1] See *Essays in Criticism*, Second Series, p. 38.

only two major poets in five hundred years, and that when Arnold made his observation in 1865 the great French writers were rapidly disappearing, while for one hundred years around this date England and America could rejoice in at least a score of poets and prose writers of the first order, the reader can make such modifications of this verdict as he thinks proper. Arnold accompanied it with the strange statement that in the England of the first quarter of the nineteenth century there was "no natural glow of life." During this very period the Waverley Novels were written, the battles of Trafalgar and Waterloo were fought, the Napoleonic Empire was destroyed, and Britain's hold on India firmly established. These are somewhat lively escapades for a sluggish and decadent people.

The susceptibilities of Arnold need not engage us too long, since one is never able to satisfy himself whether they are deliberate inventions or sincere and pathetically wrong judgments. There can be no doubt that in the main issue of his manifesto, as indeed of all his writings, he was correct concerning England's deficiencies in criticism. Ben Jonson, Dryden, Addison, Pope, Dr. Johnson, and the Edinburgh Reviewers were examples of great critical talent, which was isolated, and without any succession, too frequently swayed by passion and partisanship rather than by reason and the

knowledge of the best. Coleridge in philosophical, Hazlitt in literary, and Lamb in sympathetic criticism were accomplished and interesting authorities; but in the chaotic state then existing, they could do little more than follow their own judgment. Deprived of any consensus of the best opinion, they were unable to correct the melancholy narrowness and frequent delinquencies of the art. They left no heirs, and their results were not investigated, supplemented, or coördinated until Arnold instituted the science of English literary criticism. This was one of the most important achievements of his life, and upon it rests his serious claim to be among those who have advanced learning. He defined criticism as the endeavor, in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as it really is.[1] This obviously means much more than literary criticism; but literary criticism was the indispensable part of the whole movement. He set down the definition with the conviction already named here, that Romanticism had been allowed too wide a margin, and that "a new classicism of lucidity, proportion, and restraint" was needed to complement and correct the authors and critics of the Revolutionary period. These had received an undue stimulation from the exciting events of those stirring days, and as

[1] *Essays in Criticism*, First Series, p. 1.

a result imagination usurped the place of reason. Its discolorations stained the purity of true literature. Arnold scorned a return to the impeccable style of the school of Pope, "whose poetry," he remarked, "was conceived and composed in the wits, whereas genuine poetry is conceived and composed in the soul." He proposed to direct attention to the example of those immortals who are enshrined in classic lore. His aim was similar to that of Ruskin in the realm of art: an aim fearlessly planned and well wrought, though not without shortcomings.

Nothing was more deeply rooted in Arnold than the intense practicality of his literary genius. In this he was more American than English, and more French than either. For if, as Voltaire said, the moral vigor of its ideas has been the strength and glory of English poetry, it is also the distinction of French poetry that it not only richly conceived but radically applied its conceptions. It was this formal and immediate application that swayed Arnold's mind in the constructive part of his critical work. He held that extraneous interests and views must be completely eliminated. Waywardness, provinciality, and caprice are the pitfalls the true guide will carefully avoid; they are the besetting faults which have so often hindered correct judgments. The governing word which expresses the lawful disposition

of a true critic is *disinterestedness*. By means of this the mind can approach any question with one side or the other, and with more sides, if more there be. It will not cry, nor strive, nor persist in pressing forward with partisan violence and self-will to exalt any single aspect at the expense of others. This important requisite must be secured; "for by its aid alone can mortals hope to gain any vision of the mysterious goddess whom we shall never see except in outline." Even the outline will not be seen unless this condition of mind is ours. Goethe was the great liberator of German thought, because he had *disinterestedness*, and his profound, imperturbable naturalism was diametrically opposed to routine thinking. Certainly we cannot obtain it from the Mystics any more than from the Romanticists; for they are too near akin, too clouded over with the mists of fancifulness, too much swayed by gusts of ill-regulated sentiment, to be of any real service. According to Arnold, neither can make any practical use of ideas for the modern world.

He gives three rules for the attainment of *disinterestedness*. The first is *by keeping aloof from practice*, such a detachment being necessary, since the natural leaning of an author to his own style injures the acuteness and comprehensiveness of his critical faculty. The second is like the first in that it is negative

and somewhat vague: *by the relinquishing of predilection of whatever kind or description.* The main function of criticism is to understand and indicate the best that is known and thought in the world, without regard to party affiliation, religious belief, adherence to creed, promptings of patriotism, or bias of temperament. The one positive rule follows: *by a free play of the mind,* which, delivered from distractions, can act upon the matters before it with accuracy and justice. We are to avoid bewildering those who come after us, to transmit to them the practice of poetry and of prose with its boundaries and wholesome regulative laws, under which excellent work may again at some future time be produced.

Here Arnold shows his distinguishing merit as a critic. He had a theory, and by means of it he regarded his subject as a whole. His opinions were more than opinions; they were the studied judgments of a trained intelligence working upon a systematic order of ideas; and his purpose was to perpetuate the classic style, to find which a man need not forsake the English tongue. Those who would gain any sense of its power and charm are urged to read the poetry of the matchless singer of Puritanism. Milton is the great magistrate of letters whose work is the faithful continuation of the ancients. "All the Anglo-Saxon contagion, all the flood of Anglo-Saxon commonness, beats

vainly against this great style, but cannot shake it, and has to accept its triumphs. It triumphs in Milton, in one of our own race, tongue, faith, morals. It is no longer an exotic here; it is an inmate among us, a leaven, a power. In our race are thousands of readers, presently there will be millions, who know not a word of Greek or Latin, and will never learn those languages." [1] They need not trouble about translations so long as they read the poetry of Milton. The world will eventually be conquered by the ideals of excellence which he has forever placed within the compass of our speech.

Such teaching reveals Arnold at his best, as one of the few men who are equally important in prose, poetry, and criticism. His desire for the perfection of culture, and the rules that govern its acquirement, found their completest utterance in his volume *Essays in Criticism.* It is also his most important prose work, an epoch-making book, "the first full, varied, and best expression of the author's critical attitude, and the detailed exemplar of the critical method he inaugurated and applied." It is a necessity, not only for those of congenial temperament, but for all lovers of literature, and its reading is an event in any intelligent person's intellectual life. Notwithstanding this, its reception

[1] See *Address on John Milton*, St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, February 13th, 1888.

corroborated Arnold's belief concerning the impregnable indifference of the English people. It appeared in 1865, and a second edition was not required until 1869, when the famous preface was shorn of some ephemeral allusions. Nearly twenty years elapsed before the sale of the fourth edition was completed. Yet this is the book which contains the exquisite address to Oxford, already given, the essays on *Heine*, on the two *De Guérins*, and on themes as widely different as *Pagan and Mediæval Religious Sentiment* and *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time*. In the contrast of paganism with mediævalism Arnold places side by side with the *Hymn to Adonis* by Theocritus the *Canticle* of St. Francis, and makes the following comments upon them: "The poetry of Theocritus's hymn is poetry treating the world according to the demand of the senses; the poetry of St. Francis's hymn is poetry treating the world according to the demand of the heart and imagination. The first takes the world by its outward, sensible side; the second, by its inward, symbolical side. The first admits as much of the world as is pleasure-giving; the second admits the whole world, rough and smooth, painful and pleasure-giving, all alike, but all transfigured by the power of a spiritual emotion, all brought under a law of supersensual love, having its seat in the soul." [1] Such exposition

[1] *Essays in Criticism*, First Series (London 1902), p. 203.

as this, while it did not impress the public, delighted competent judges, who, though aware that Arnold was sometimes away from the center, were equally aware that there had been nothing like it since Hazlitt. In Arnold's apparently languid and reiterative rhetoric there is a sinuous strength and attractiveness which will outlast the vigorous style of more popular authors. It is a protest against charlatanism and vulgarity, and a plea for purity and naturalism in our literary standards. Without any appetite for moralizing, one might suggest that many a young clergyman and public speaker will save his soul alive, so far as effective utterance is concerned, by making himself thoroughly familiar with the better side of Arnold. The tendencies to tautology, verbosity, unrestrained allusion, artificiality, trite quotation, and excessive symbolism are the bane for which Arnold's thoroughly informed and penetrating criticism is the antidote.

SEVENTH LECTURE

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Plainness and clearness without shadow of stain!
Clearness divine!
Ye heavens, whose pure dark regions have no sign
Of languor, though so calm and though so great,
Are yet untroubled and unpassionate!
Who, though so noble, share in the world's toil,
And, though so task'd, keep free from dust and soil!
I will not say that your mild deeps retain
A tinge, it may be, of their silent pain
Who have long'd deeply once, and long'd in vain;
But I will rather say that you remain
A world above man's head, to let him see
How boundless might his soul's horizons be,
How vast, yet of what clear transparency!
How it were good to live there, and breathe free!
How fair a lot to fill
Is left to each man still!

ARNOLD. — *A Summer Night.*

MATTHEW ARNOLD

PART II

I

Arnold had a wide and congenial acquaintance which enriched his private life; but his mannerisms were unfortunate, and frequently hid the fact that he was human on every side of his nature. They hardened as he grew older, and "a slightly exotic vocabulary" made its appearance in his later work. So it came to pass that this man — who was the idol of his intimates, who ardently loved life, and who believed he had a mission to preach his gospel to his countrymen — was misunderstood, neglected, and condemned so far as the general public was concerned. He had virtually laid aside poetry when he wrote *A French Eton*, which was published a year before the *Essays*. In this volume certain assumptions, which afterward became familiar, made their first appearance, and they grew bolder the more he aired them in successive books. Not content with being a literary critic, he was disposed to extend his function to political, sociological, and ecclesiastical affairs. He displayed a marked animus toward theology and cler-

icalism. The aristocracy was charged with being insensible to ideas; the Anglican Church had made a miserable failure; the middle class had no taste, no real knowledge of ethics, philosophy, or politics; and England's only hope lay in imitating France, whose enthusiastic and practical application of ideas to every phase of human life kindled his admiration. Professor Saintsbury characterizes his attitude as "a combination of Socrates and Lord Chesterfield," highly diverting to some, corrective of others, and not without disaster for himself. Arnold had a slight knowledge of his countrymen, and for this reason he was never tired of reproaching them. Although he does not openly express the class distinction he afterward made, the English people are already sharply separated in his mind as *Barbarians*, *Philistines*, and *Populace*.

Except perhaps in the case of Browning, his references to his contemporaries lacked appreciation, to say nothing of cordiality. Lord Coleridge said that they shriveled in his presence. Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* is disagreeable because the writer's mind contains nothing but hunger, rebellion, and rage. No fine writing can hide this thoroughly, and it will be fatal to her in the long run. Bulwer Lytton's nature likewise is by no means a perfect one, and this makes itself felt in his book. Ruskin is more fortunate, inasmuch as he

meets with a scanty approval. Bishop Wilberforce is portrayed as of no real power of mind, a society-hunting and man-pleasing ecclesiastic. Of Tennyson he remarks, "My interest in him is slight, and my conviction that he will not finally stand high is firm." After Thackeray's death he wrote, "I cannot say that I like him thoroughly, though we were on friendly terms, and he was not to my mind a great writer." To Keats he gave a belated recognition, and he saw the defects of Coleridge more conspicuously than his excellences. Elizabethan literature was full of spirit and power, but "steeped in humors and whimsicalities to its very lips." Even Shakespeare did not escape. Arnold censured him for a tortuous and faulty style in many passages, and termed his diction fantastic and false. Lincoln's utterances lacked distinction. And the whole outlook and manner of Macaulay was derided. This is not sweet reasonableness; nor is it envy or jealousy. Arnold was not always given to the former, but he was absolutely above the latter. He kept his unqualified sympathy and approval for a selected few, chiefly Wordsworth and some Continentals, of whom Sainte-Beuve was the most prominent. His excessive devotion to this remnant introduced into his criticism of others the personal equation he was always deploring; and while he was conscientious,

and desired to be just, he was often muddled in his estimates.

This is seen in the controversial manner he adopted toward the Puritan element of English-speaking society. He wrote from the standpoint of an Erastian, who frankly believed in a State Church if it could be modeled on his own lines of comprehensiveness. He had no love for that type of church life which, until the last decades of the nineteenth century, remained almost untouched by the progress of thought. And at bottom he did have a genuine estimate for Puritanism, albeit accompanied by a knowledge of its shortcomings, and an earnest hope that he might be able to remedy them. In one of his American addresses he spoke of the Puritan training which we have undergone here, and remarked that, as "a means for enabling that poor, inattentive, and immoral creature, man, to love and appropriate and make part of his being, divine ideas, on which he could not otherwise have laid or kept hold, the discipline of Puritanism has been invaluable; and," he continues, "the more I read history, the more I see of mankind, the more I recognize its value."

True, it was given to Puritanism to fix and intensify in England and America a standard of conduct; and even its narrowness was the result of moral concentration attended by high seriousness and the governing sense of the

presence of God. The objection Arnold made was that, in spite of its undeniable excellences, it afforded no place for the demands of intellect, knowledge, beauty, and manners; and that, after it had enjoyed a season of prosperity, it retired within itself, where its imperfections solidified and became less capable of correction. The Puritan had overvalued the doctrine of self-restraint and dwelt too exclusively on strictness of conscience. Arnold saw that a reaction was inevitable, and he feared it might eventually bring a resuscitation of the pagan spirit, and end in the sordidness of mere pleasure-seeking, or even absolute degradation.

He aimed to effect a reconciliation by the union of those two tendencies, the names of which are well known to his readers — Hellenism and Hebraism. These are not antinomies, mutually exclusive of each other, but component parts of the scheme for human development. In that development Hellenism and Hebraism are indispensable contributions. But the end is not in them; it is in the growth of the man himself, and to this end Arnold would have them reign side by side in friendly empire over the human mind. He is willing to admit that Puritanism was perhaps necessary to strengthen the moral fiber of the English race, to break the yoke of ecclesiastical domination over men's minds and thus prepare the way for freedom. Still, culture points out that

the harmonized perfection of generations of Puritans has been in consequence sacrificed. It is now time for us to Hellenize and to praise knowing, for we have Hebraized too much and have overvalued doing. Culture for him was a harmonious expansion of all the powers which make the beauty and the worth of human nature, and it was not consistent with the overdevelopment of any one power at the expense of the rest. Here, he adds, culture goes beyond religion as generally conceived by us. Literature must be at the top, the knowledge of the best that has been spoken in history, philosophy, and poetry. "While Hebraism seizes upon certain plain, capital intimations of the universal order, and rivets itself upon them with unequalled grandeur and intensity, the bent of Hellenism is to follow with flexible activity the whole play of the universal order, to be apprehensive of missing any part of it, of sacrificing one part to another." The Greeks may have failed to give adequate attention to the claims of man's moral side, but they arrived at a more comprehensive adjustment of the claims of both sides in men, the intellectual as well as the moral, and they made a reconciliation of both which is of the utmost service to the modern world. Dr. W. L. Watkinson comments with pungency on this arraignment of the moral order. In his lecture on *The Influence of Skepticism on Character* the

distinguished preacher impeaches Arnold for his flouting of the Puritan sympathy with the righteousness of the Bible and the Puritan preference for goodness rather than beauty and taste. According to the ethics of the Scriptures, "Righteousness is the essential, supreme, final law of development for the individual, the nation, the race; wealth, arms, art, literature, trade, government, and what else, being left to take their chance, which they are then best able to do, under the ordering of the natural action of the sovereign law of righteousness." [1] The placing of anything on an equality with character, the exaltation of any form of intellectual pursuit above moral principle and obligation, is obnoxious to the conscience of a people trained in the precepts of the Holy Scriptures. Such is Dr. Watkinson's rebuff to the propagandism against that section of English life of which Arnold himself said that with all its faults it was still the best stuff in the nation. The reviving taste for the drama, and the increasing appreciation for letters and the arts, were indications to Arnold of England's ultimate salvation. He, however, seriously injured his influence because he would indulge too freely his dangerous gift for gibes and sneers. The leaders of contemporary Puritanism were incensed by his polite and studied abuse. He met their fulminations with a pas-

[1] Watkinson's *Influence of Skepticism on Character*, pp. 34–37.

sive resistance which was more effective than a vigorous onslaught. But his vision of a reconstructed England and America, in which the graces of Hellenism would give equipoise and completeness to the Puritan character, was unrealized by him, and his first approaches ended in failure.

As distinguished from the Puritanism of America, that of England offered a promising field for his evangel of culture. For there Free Churchmen had been practically excluded from the Universities, and yet they had been compelled to bear their full share of the burden of making, moralizing, and liberalizing the empire. Like their American brethren, they had shared with the Hebrew in the sense of holiness and with the Roman in the sense of law and politics. There is no reason to doubt that, with an equal opportunity, they could also have shared, long before they did, in those graces which are the finished product of the natural faculties. Where Arnold did not succeed, others have done so, and the precisian conscience of sectarianism, with its "unlovely leanness of moral judgment," has now been ameliorated from more humane sources. The gloomy and perverse asceticism of which he justly complained is passing away, while the beauty and harmony which are everywhere the reflection of God have come to their own among the sons and daughters of the

Cromwellians and the Pilgrims. What course Puritanism on both sides of the Atlantic would have followed, had it not been interrupted and occupied by its stern defense of liberty, it is perhaps idle to speculate. Milton — a far more complete soul than Arnold, one indeed to whom he himself pointed as the solitary representative in the modern period of the authoritative traditions of the past — has expressed the earlier ideals of Puritanism when undisturbed by war and persecution. In the sad, sweet strains of *Il Penseroso* and the joyous music of *L'Allegro* there is a stateliness and a delight which were lost when the poet doffed his singing robes that he might impeach the tyrants of the State. We have gloried so much in our fathers' victories and in the results which followed them that perhaps we have forgotten what losses were incurred by the thwarting of these earlier ideals. At any rate, we can console ourselves with the suggestion that, had not our ancestors thus contended and won, Arnold would hardly have been permitted to print what he did. They nursed the pinion which impelled his steel; for if Archbishop Laud could have laid hands on the outspoken critic of creeds and of the Episcopacy, a charming literary career might have come to grief.

The term "Philistine," of which Arnold makes such a liberal use, is first found in his essays

on *Heine*. He borrowed it from the German, and he applied it to the self-complacent and conventional respectability of the English nation. There Goliath of Gath pitched his tent, there was the god Dagon, and there were the hosts of the uncircumcised. These animadversions were prompted by the prevalent disinclination to culture which existed in the chosen island. He sat closer to the conscience of intellectual reform than his fellow-citizens, and he incessantly attacked them for their conceit, fatuousness, and stupidity. He opposed their ignorant assumptions, their false standards, and their vitiated tastes. As a child of the ideal he had no possible relation with those self-appointed guardians of the truth who had ceased to be able to recognize truth when they saw it. Carlyle anticipated Arnold in his detestation of Philistinism, to which he referred as "respectability in a thousand gigs." The term respectable was too polite and sedate for Arnold's use in this connection. His analysis was more thorough and more caustic; he confuted the accepted guides of public opinion with rough and unsparing words interspersed with soft, silky, insinuating refinements and quips more irritating than merely irascible comments. These corrupted powers ruled every sphere; the worlds of art, literature, and politics were their property. They exercised dictatorship over morals and

theology; their verdicts, though based on no well-founded tenets, were beyond appeal. For him they were blind leaders of the blind, provincials encased in obsolete dogmas; and he treated them with supercilious blandness and ironical scorn. He tells the *Guardian* that it is dull, *Presbyter Anglicanus* that he is born of Hyrcanian tigers, and the editor of the *Saturday Review* that he is a late and embarrassed convert to the Philistines. When Mr. Wright complained of Arnold's strictures upon his translation of the *Iliad*, he replied that the matter had left his memory. But he was willing to withdraw the offending phrase, and expressed his sorrow for having used it. He says: "Mr. Wright, however, would perhaps be more indulgent to my vivacity, if he considered that we are none of us likely to be lively much longer. My vivacity is but the last sparkle of flame before we are all in the dark, the last glimpse of color before we all go into drab, — the drab of the earnest, prosaic, practical, austerely literal future. Yes, the world will soon be the Philistines'! and then, with every voice, not of thunder, silenced, and the whole earth filled and ennobled every morning by the magnificent roaring of the young lions of the *Daily Telegraph*, we shall all yawn in one another's faces with the dismallest, the most unimpeachable gravity." [1] The modesty of Arnold's reck-

[1] *Essays in Criticism*, First Series, p. 6.

oning on the illuminating qualities of his own vivacity will doubtless appear unto many; however that may be, he would persist in prophesying, the most gratuitous of all forms of error.

Yet much can be forgiven a man who says concerning culture, "It seeks to do away with classes and sects; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freely nourished and not bound by them. This is the social idea; and the men of culture are the true apostles of humanity." Arnold is here in one of his happiest humors, and the more credit is due to him when we remember the dull routine he was called upon to endure. "Here," he complains, "is my programme for this afternoon: Avalanches — The Steam-engine — The Thames — India-rubber — Bricks — The Battle of Poitiers — Subtraction — The Reindeer — The Gunpowder Plot — The Jordan. Alluring, is it not? Twenty minutes each, and the days of one's life are only threescore years and ten." This kind of thing lasted for thirty-five years, during which he displayed the virtue already mentioned, and which is found in both his poetry and his criticism, a dauntless courage — courage in his crusade against British indifferrence and provincialism, courage in his bold

challenge of the false gods of democracy, courage in his indictment of men in high place who sought to cover their intellectual destitution with sounding and superfluous phrases. Had Arnold's wisdom always been equal to his courage, he would have entered more abundantly than he did into the results of his labor. It is easy enough to detect him in the breach of his own rules, and to chide him for turning aside to indulge in disproportionate praise and blame. Yet we are not to forget that he created a new era in criticism, and gave a new interest to æsthetic forms of culture.

II

In politics Arnold was a sort of hesitant Liberal, without the habit of allegiance to party leaders, and with some marked peculiarities of his own.[1] He was hospitably inclined toward many new theories; but as these were more often wrong than right, his entertainment of them was looked upon as a harmless diversion. Besides, a man who persisted in judging for himself, who took nothing at second hand, who bowed the knee to no reputation, however high its pedestal in the temple of fame, was not likely to be a successful politician. He pitied the sorrows of the people who suffer, the dim common populations "who faint away"; but he pitied them from above,

[1] Introduction to *Culture and Anarchy*.

and the idea that the fountains of authority were in these masses never occurred to him. He had honorable and true convictions on certain vexed issues of the day, issues which are still in process of adjustment and have no immediate prospect of settlement. He held that there must be a levelling in the immense inequalities of material condition and property which exist in England, and which he thought were due to the feudal system of land tenure. Municipal life should also be cleansed, and its ignorance and pauperism, crime and vice, exterminated. Secondary education ought to be extended on a scale commensurate with natural necessities, and made accessible to the democracy. This admirable scheme is an extensive programme for the poet in politics, and seems almost more like Mill than Arnold. But his usual perverse fate accompanied it, and probably he was better known and less loved for his personal dislike of Gladstone or his opposition to Home Rule than for his ardent support of such enlightened and necessary measures as land reform and higher education. He astonished his friends and delighted his foes by opposing the Burials Bill, which gave Free Churchmen the right to use their own ministry and forms of service. He gravely argued that this would substitute less suitable and dignified liturgies, and that such a substitution would be equivalent to displacing a poem

of Milton for some verses by Eliza Cook. Yet despite these unhappy misdirections, he wondered why the Free Churchmen did not hail him as their deliverer. To the last he vehemently denounced the disestablishment of the Episcopal Church in Ireland, and he would have been willing to see the Methodist, Roman Catholic, and Presbyterian Churches made partakers in State pay and patronage rather than have the measure enacted. His scheme of ultimate union included the incorporation of Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism, and Puritanism, although he realized that this was a far-off event to be preceded by the amalgamation of Protestants. It is probable that Arnold sympathized with the Roman Catholic Church rather than with the Church of his birth or with Nonconformity. The efficient organization of the older communion appealed to his high views on the question, and he made the prediction that Romanism would be the prevailing form for the Christianity of the future. He was alive to its credulities, intolerance, and dislike of criticism; but these were traits which it shared with human nature at large, and the differences between it and Protestantism were quantitive rather than qualitative. It appeals to the imagination in a way that Protestantism can not and does not. It has the commendation of antiquity, and accessories which give it nobleness and amplitude. Its knowledge of

human nature is deep and subtle, its stores of human experience abound in wisdom and statecraft. If Romanism were only awake to its perennial power of attraction, it would speedily increase its already large constituencies. But it must be "a Romanism purged, opening itself to the light and air, having the consciousness of its own poetry, freed from its sacerdotal despotism, and also from its pseudo-scientific apparatus of superannuated dogma." Such is the type of Catholicism to which Arnold would commit the welfare of the Church at large. And he regrets that the advocates of the Catholic creeds and of the ultramontane system should vainly claim for them that which is alone true of Catholic worship. This is a purely religious function, it is eternal and universal, and, if freed from the theological and political elements which embarrass it, would reassert itself with august authority. But he concludes that "to rule over the moment and the credulous has more attraction than to work for the future and the sane."[1]

In his official intercourse with Nonconformist school-managers, Arnold gained that curiously intimate knowledge of the various denominations which furnished the material for his discussion of their history, doctrines, and influence upon one another and upon the

[1] Essay on *Eugénie de Guérin.*

nation. Notwithstanding his apparently unavoidable sarcasm, he treated many of their issues in a broad and illuminating way; and it is a misfortune that it is not Arnold's views which have become current coin, so much as certain capricious literary phrases and twists of speech. Men who speak of his contempt for the "dissidence of dissent" and the "Protestantism of the Protestant religion" have yet to learn that he always wrote with the aim of reconciliation, and with the firm belief that Nonconformity was doomed unless it could save itself by a return to the Establishment, which must be purified and broadened to receive it.

His religious views reflect the turbulent period of transition in which he lived. It was no longer possible for him to take refuge in the quietism of Wordsworth or in the German metaphysics of Coleridge. Scientific progress had caused the disquisitions of these men to appear as far removed from Arnold's day as were the speculations of the Schoolmen. Further, he had not the necessary learning to be a theological leader, and it was his lack of this which led him to some fantastic conclusions and also incurred the opposition of contemporary orthodoxy. Yet his spirituality of outlook and ethical purpose were unmistakable, and he knew that, remarkable as were the revelations of organized knowledge, they would

eventually fail to satisfy the yearnings of man's higher nature. His essays on theological and polemical subjects were published at an opportune moment when the matters he discussed were well to the front. They will continue to be read as models of English prose; but it is more than doubtful if they will exercise any formative influence. So far as biblical criticism and the philosophy of religion were concerned, he initiated nothing, but simply emphasized and gave a popular setting to certain phases of German scholarship. He reveals the spirit though not the temper of the Tübingen school. His treatment of these and kindred questions is found chiefly in *Culture and Anarchy: an Essay in Political and Social Criticism* (1869); *St. Paul and Protestantism: with an Introduction on Puritanism and the Church of England* (1870); *Literature and Dogma: an Essay toward a Better Apprehension of the Bible* (1872); *Last Essays on Church and Religion* (1877); and *Discourses in America* (1885).

It should be added that Arnold laid no claim to theological knowledge; indeed, so far as dogma was concerned, he was proud of his detachment from it. He believed that the world had had enough of it, and his purpose was to examine its stock notions and current phrases and pour into them a fresh stream of ideas. Mr. William H. Dawson argues that,

as a layman, Arnold was the better able to do this with an open mind; for he had no thesis to establish and no preconceptions to confirm — in a word, nothing to prove. It was therefore easier for him to grasp large spiritual truths and interpret them in a generous temper. He was freed from exclusiveness and provinciality, and the whole range of human experience in religion was open to his inquiry. In brief, disinterestedness, Arnold's first canon of criticism, was applied to the study of these questions. Its presence in poets and philosophers has made them rather than theologians the prophets of God to the modern generation. And the milder and more sympathetic attitude of Christians toward one another and toward non-Christian religions is largely owing to the simple candor with which claims to a monopoly of revelation and grace have been brushed aside by such teachers as Carlyle and Browning.

Arnold defines God in various ways. He refers to the Supreme Being, in his original preface to *Literature and Dogma*, as a great personal first Cause, the moral and intelligent Governor of the universe; he would have us remember, however, that the word "God" must not be regarded as a term of exact knowledge, but as one of poetry and eloquence. It cannot convey the fully developed object of the speaker's consciousness; and further, since consciousness

differs at intervals and men mean different things by it, it is rather an elusive process to discover Arnold's foundation for the Deity. He speaks of Him again, in his favorite and descriptive definition, as "the enduring Power, not ourselves, which makes for Righteousness." He insists that the idea of God as a magnified and unnatural man must make way for a Divine Being to whom he appears to deny personality, and who is once more defined as "the stream of tendency by which all things fulfil the law of their being." It is unnecessary to follow Arnold in all his deviations; and although he was perfectly serious, it is sometimes hard to believe him so. His strong religious sense was affected by the notion that religion can be selected and arranged at will, or to suit one's personal tastes and preferences, but he never seemed to understand the other side of the question — that religion is a divine authority and a divine revelation; a superior and revealing gift bestowed and conditioned by a higher Power. Viewed in this light, it must be taken as offered, in strict accordance with its own demands. Again, Arnold failed to distinguish between the intolerant and effete phases of a passing orthodoxy and those more enlightened and influential schools of theological thought which were rapidly gaining ascendency in his day. Lurking under all his terms is the recurrent error of arbitrary and superficial classifica-

tion, which confused men and measures, and treated as one those who were in many respects sundered as the poles. Convenient and striking phraseology cannot successfully conceal these confusions; his thoughtful readers will detect them. The careless generalities which proclaim as a unity things that totally differ may be the delight of the vulgar, but they are distasteful to the cultured mind.

In speaking of the New Testament, he would take no part in Renan's insinuations against the moral integrity of the disciples. Their good faith was above question and testifies for itself. While "miracles do not happen," and are an unnecessary support to religious belief, he admits that the majority of people have found them a stimulus. It is needless to argue against them, for the *Zeitgeist* is the destroyer of such *Aberglaube*, and we can afford to leave them to the drift of time and the widening experiences of the race. Whenever Arnold wished to introduce a universal corrective, he turned to the *Zeitgeist*. His veneration for it was profound; for him it had an authority that nothing could withstand. Its masterful influences went beyond those of any miracle.

The aim of his life was to make sweet reason and the will of God prevail in his home. He maintained a religious discipline, and there is reason to believe that daily prayer and spiritual meditation were his private habits. He had a

surpassing reverence and love for Jesus Christ, and he avers that "while Christianity makes for men's happiness, it does not rest upon that as a motive. . . . It finds a far surer ground in believing that Christ is come from God; in following Christ, loving Christ; and in the happiness that believing in Him and loving Him gives, it finds its mightiest sanction." With mellowing accent he declares that Christianity must survive; and those who fancied they had done with it, those who had turned it aside because what was presented in its name was so unreliable, would have to return to it again and to learn it better.

Yet the works of Arnold are full of a diluted positivism; and whatever may have been the idea of God which satisfied his personal experience, the Deity who emerges from his philosophical speculations is too shadowy and unreal for strength or comfort. In fact, he was not so much a religious teacher as an ethical idealist. By reducing religion to conduct, and by expressly denying to conduct any relation to, or meaning for, an after-life, he makes religion a matter of policy.[1] He saw with appalling clearness the ignorance and grossness which he constantly assailed, and he also realized the false position in which faith is placed when all the tendencies of knowledge are opposed to it. But he did not see the truth,

[1] W. H. Dawson's *Matthew Arnold*, p. 257.

or if he did he disregarded it, that a man who has no scientific estimation of his beliefs, and yet has learned the secret of conduct, has, according to Arnold's own reckoning, become the master of four-fifths of his life.

One wishes that he could have trusted the plain people, and thus have laid the ghost of popular credulousness which always haunted him. He could not easily believe that not many learned and not many noble are chosen; that the mystery and grandeur of religion have been concealed from the wise and the prudent and revealed to the simple; and yet in one place he conceded this against himself and against his own position. "Moral rules," he says, "apprehended as ideas first, and then rigorously followed as laws, are, and must be, for the sage only. The mass of mankind has neither force of intellect enough to apprehend them clearly as ideas, nor force of character enough to follow them strictly as laws. . . . The paramount virtue of religion is, that it has *lighted up* morality; that it has supplied the emotion and inspiration needful for carrying the sage along the narrow way perfectly, for carrying the ordinary man along it at all. Even the religions with most dross in them have had something of this virtue; but the Christian religion manifests it with unexampled splendor." [1] The story of this achieve-

[1] Essays on *Marcus Aurelius*.

ment is contained in the Holy Scriptures, which according to Arnold are literary and not scientific, a record of human development pulsating with life and movement and not a storehouse for proof-texts. Morals, not metaphysics, are the essence of the Bible; its words are fluid utterances, its one great message is righteousness. And once these truths are apprehended, the forcing of the Scriptures will cease, and the meaning of the authors will no longer be obscured by artificial interpretations.

However seriously some of Arnold's followers have perverted his views and elevated beyond measure the artistic and literary senses in which he believed so strongly, he himself was thoroughly sound at heart, and his moral nature was of the highest. He affirms that chastity and charity, the two great Christian virtues, obtain signal testimony from experience, and by many palpable proofs have convinced the world of their cardinal nature. The nations that neglect them plunge into the doom of ruin. "Down they go; Assyria falls, Babylon, Greece, Rome; they all fall for want of conduct, righteousness; Judea itself, the Holy Land, the land of God's Israel, falls too, and falls for want of righteousness." [1]

It is not surprising that Arnold should have courted the acquaintance of such master spirits as Spinoza and Marcus Aurelius. He gives a

[1] *Literature and Dogma*, p. 353.

succinct and interesting description of the philosopher of Amsterdam, whose ejection from the synagogue was followed by his ostracism and subsequent religious independency. Spinoza would not be an orthodox Jew, and he could not become a Christian. His life, however, was serene and devout, with frequent moods of religious reflection. The Old Testament was his favorite book, and his critical work on it made him one of the pioneers in biblical criticism. His motto was, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Placed by his transcendent gifts and the scorn of his kinsmen beyond temporary organized religious forms, he dwelt in an enforced yet welcome isolation; which won for him Arnold's sympathy and praise. Marcus Aurelius was another striking case of religious independency. He had a strongly ethical nature attached to no definitely religious creed. If Constantine was a baptized Pagan, Marcus Aurelius was an unbaptized Christian; for his piety, though not classified, was sincere, and linked him to the Shepherd who said, "Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold." He was the last and greatest follower of Zeno; he stripped Stoicism of its sterner aspects, and gave to it a warmth and tenderness alien to its cold and rigid spirit. His singularity made him acceptable to Arnold, who reverenced the Emperor, though he admitted that his system was *in-*

effectual. The characteristics of Spinoza and Marcus Aurelius were seized by Arnold for the consolation and help of his own unconventional nature. Concerning Aurelius he says: "He remains the especial friend and comforter of all clear-headed and upward-striving men, in those ages most especially which walk by sight and not by faith and yet have no open vision; he cannot give such souls, perhaps, all they yearn for, but he gives them much, and what he gives they can receive." [1]

Arnold is unusually severe upon the delinquencies of authors, and their intellectual brilliancy does not blind him to their ethical defects. Coleridge, he says, had no morals; his character inspired repugnance. Burns he calls a beast with splendid gleams. The laxity of Goethe's life is sharply condemned; and *Faust*, though great, was marred by the fact that it was a drama of seduction. He regarded Renan's *L'Abbesse de Jouarre* as a book entirely unworthy of the author. Heine, with all his gifts, lacked the old-fashioned, laborious, eternally needful moral deliverance, and left a name stained by wickedness, sensuality, and incessant mocking. The *Life of Shelley* deeply shocked him, and he declared, after reading the book, that he felt sickened forever of the subject of irregular relations.

In 1883 Mr. and Mrs. Arnold visited America,

[1] *Essays in Criticism*, First Series, p. 378.

and were received with cordiality by his admirers and and with characteristic hospitality by the nation at large. Many were surprised to find him a broad-shouldered, manly Englishman, with a face worn and wrinkled like that of a sea-captain, and a profile whose finely chiseled features betokened breeding and the power of command. His appearance contradicted the expectations of those who had prejudged it by the fastidious and feminine delicacy of some of his writings. Because of his lack of elocutionary gifts, the lectures he delivered were not heard by the majority of his audience. When printed and published, they became his favorite book and the one by which he desired to be remembered. He valued his American friends, but cared little for Americans as a people. Their life was uninteresting; and the mere nomenclature of the country acted upon a cultivated person "like the incessant pricking of pins."

He came again in 1886, and returned home to die on April 15, 1888, of the malady which had struck down his father and grandfather and which suddenly released him from the responsibilities and cares of mortal life.

It is impossible to set forth within the available limits of this brief survey the numerous aspects of so diversified a character and career as Arnold's. The place he holds as a

critic has been determined by his excellent canons of criticism and by the exquisite purity of his language. He made no pretensions to be a philosopher, although he had a philosophy of his own; but his thought was not distinguished for depth or penetration. He popularized the best French literature; he registered a necessary protest against treating the Bible as a talisman: he rebuked with skilful audacity the vulgarities of a commercial nation, and he used a few pregnant phrases, some of which he borrowed, to chasten his contemporaries. But his permanent influence will be found, if anywhere, in his poetry. Here, although "the grand moment is not his in certain command," he sounded depths which his prose never fathomed. A disciple of Wordsworth even more than of Goethe, Arnold takes his place among the Victorian singers as a poet of nature, of beauty, and, more than either, of doubt. It is doubt tinged with melancholy; he is loth to leave the former habitations of his spirit, and he looks back upon them with infinite desire and infinite regret.[1] From these mingled elements are evoked his most intimate strains; and though he cannot speak to the popular heart, so long as men love intensely refined and classic forms, or seek a balm for their restless and unsatisfied yearnings, they will continue to read *Resignation*, *Dover Beach*,

[1] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th edition, Vol. IX, p. 641.

and *Thyrsis*. His influence upon the whole was an excellent one; and as the irritating flippancies which retarded it are rightly forgotten, his truly religious nature and ethical earnestness will become more manifest. His sincerity and courage have already been mentioned, and they are what we should expect from such a man. He lived a happy and useful life; he increased the luster of an already honored name; and he secured a high place in the annals of that great literature which he loved and longed to benefit.

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